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Volume Eight · · · Fall 1948 · · · Number Three

William James and the Modern Mood
—Jane Mayhall

The Promise of American Liberalism
—William G. Carleton

German Writers and Writing Today
—Joachim Joesten

Utopia, Ltd. —Freeman Champney

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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

Volume VIII Published in September, 1948 Number 3

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The ANTIOCH REVIEW

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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Indexed in the *International Index to Periodicals*

Published at Yellow Springs, Ohio, in March, June, September, and December by THE ANTIOCH REVIEW, Incorporated, a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio. THE ANTIOCH REVIEW is not an official publication of Antioch College and the views expressed in its columns are not necessarily those of the College. Subscription rates: $3.00 the year; Canadian, $3.50; Foreign, $4.00. Single copies, 75 cents.

Contributions should be sent to The Editors of THE ANTIOCH REVIEW, Yellow Springs, Ohio. Unsolicited manuscripts which are found unavailable for publication will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Editors assume no responsibility for the views expressed by contributors of articles.

Publication Office, 212 Xenia Avenue, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Entered as second-class matter, March 22, 1941 at the post office at Yellow Springs, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

UTOPIA, Ltd.

By FREEMAN CHAMPNEY

COMMUNISM AND SOCIALISM were household words in this country over a hundred years ago. They had simple, uncomplicated meanings then—in contrast to the mishmash of demonology that they evoke today. They stood for small colonies or communities of people in which individual property had been more or less abolished and economic and social life deliberately controlled for the (presumptive) welfare of the entire group. These little utopias set up shop under a great variety of conditions and leading ideas, and they experimented with pretty much the whole range of economic organization and social controls. What they had in common was a drive toward a better way of living and a separation from the larger society. Nearly a hundred of them are recorded in early nineteenth-century America.

In most of these utopian groups, the leaders thought of their own little ventures as spearheads of a movement that was ultimately to reform and revitalize society and bring about a new golden age for all mankind. Sooner or later they all either expired or came to terms with society at large. Some failed spectacularly, some dismally. The amount of energy, consecration, benevolence and righteousness that went down the drain is appalling. The utopias failed because of their own inadequacies of ability, of co-operation, of resources; because, in the long run, even the most successful of them could not offer values and incentives comparable to the big, bad outside world. They failed because most people found godly living and common purpose less exciting and less rewarding than the triumphs of the new mechanical and commercial civilization, and because the vision, the discipline, and the consecration they required did not find lodgment in the germ plasm. Finally they largely failed even to be recurring events because the "scientific" social-

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Editor FREEMAN CHAMPNEY's last appearance in the *Review* was with "Taft-Hartley and the Printers" in Spring, 1948. His background for discussing utopias includes close acquaintance over a twenty-year period with a fair sampling of "the soldiery of dissent."

ism of Marx proscribed the futility of little utopias and siphoned off the energy of the rebels and dreamers to the king-size, once-and-for-all revolution.

But the failure of the utopias was, in a sense, a failure of the larger society from which they seceded. The evils from which they tried to escape are still with us. The securities and the positive values they sought are hardly a drug on today's market. The experience for which they paid with lives and hopes still has an unworked residue of relevance. They were little pilot plants in the possibilities of human life and there are things to be learned from the recordings and the debris.

A study of the utopias is especially relevant because some of the conditions which fostered such experiments in the past are present today in augmented form. War and depression have shaken our traditional American optimism and eaten away much of our faith in both the limitless possibility and the value of material success. Industrial technology has wrought miracles without end but life today seems to involve more insecurities and frustrations than ever. Our activities are becoming increasingly compulsive and segmented. Even the individual family is a less and less satisfactory in-group but has to develop multiple relationships with larger groups if it is to avoid dullness and destruction. There is a spreading hunger for a larger and saner life, for work that makes sense, and for a feeling of brotherhood and common purpose.

At the same time, the Marxist dream has lost its idealistic glamor and become a nightmare of dehumanized power and tyranny. It is no longer easy to believe that overthrow of the "system" will result in anything more beneficent than the rise of a new, and tighter, system. Insofar as the promise of large-scale socialism once tended to drain off energies which might have gone into utopian experiments, the new disillusion with class revolution should lead to another wave of utopianism.

The chief ingredients that seem to be lacking are the hope and faith that once expected society to be perfected or the Second Coming achieved in one lifetime. We have utopians of a sort today but many of them seem to be looking for personal escape rather than social regeneration. They would gladly settle for a communal hideout safe from atomic bombs, draft boards, tax collectors, and assembly lines—though the rest of the world went to pot. There is a strong element of total rejection of society at large in many of these people—not from any posi-

tive drive toward something better but from hatred, fear, and in retaliation for what society has done to them.

This attitude is especially noticeable among pacifists, many of whom are still suffering shock from their war experience. They dissented then from the purposes of society and they suffered for their dissent. Many of them project onto the government or the dominant social structure the hostilities that their creed forbids them to feel toward individuals. A process of mutual rejection has had the results which might be expected. (Society at large has a heavy responsibility on its shoulders for the wholesale jailing of "nonreligious" pacifists and the farce that "Civilian Public Service" frequently became.) What we find today in the little colonies of decentralists, "folk schools," bohemians, and the like is apt to be an assortment of social abstainers rather than reformers. Many of them are utopians only in the negative sense of getting away from the going world and in their pathetic hope that things will be better (for them) if they get together with enough of their own kind.

The mischief is that the larger job of social reintegration needs the moral earnestness and the value-questionings that these people can give it. These qualities are not limited to seceders or pacifists, of course, but they are never in oversupply and we cannot afford to lose any of them. Most of us would agree on a general objective of peace and abundance plus democracy. A variety of approaches can lead toward such goals. The social idealist, if he stays with us, can do important scout and outrider work.

A close-knit, healthy society performs more or less automatically the function of keeping its individual members successfully oriented to their culture and to each other—in other words, it keeps them sane. Today's urbanization, segmentation of life, and moral drift provides little of that essential social function. The burden falls on totally inadequate, pick-up-the-pieces social work institutions and on a relative handful of overworked psychiatrists. The utopian colony provides what the sociologists call "primary group" contacts and it can often do a therapeutic job for its members that they need desperately and are unlikely to find elsewhere. The danger, of course, is that the social orientation provided will be useful only in the closed circle of the colony (or

in others like it) and will further alienate the individual from life in the larger society.

Social experimentation is something we need and can use a lot of. But if it cuts itself off too completely from the going world its relevance is at least questionable. There is no particular sense, moreover, in blandly repeating the mistakes of past experiments. Many of today's utopians are discussing plans and places for new hideouts in appalling ignorance of the clear lessons of what should be their special tradition. New Harmony (both under Father Rapp and under Robert Owen), the Shakers, Fruitlands, Brook Farm, the "Phalanxes" of the Fourierists, Hopedale, the Oneida Community, and their many lesser parallels and imitators furnish a background from which conclusions and generalizations can be drawn with some certainty. A "pilot plant" is of no use unless it is trying something new.

II

No utopia was ever launched under more favorable auspices than Robert Owen's New Harmony. It took over intact the physical plant of the Rappites, with its three thousand acres of cultivated land, eighty brick and frame buildings and one hundred log cabins, and its fully-equipped industries. Both Owen and his educational associate William McClure had substantial wealth to put into the working capital of the community. The whole official atmosphere of the group was one of confidence and success. The flavor of defeat, maladjustment, and secession from going society—so often embedded in the grain of utopian groups—was not part of Owen's makeup. There was undoubtedly plenty of it in the individuals who came into New Harmony to partake of the new social order, but the hearty indiscriminateness of Owen's invitation to one and all shows his remarkable innocence of the human complexities of his undertaking.

This innocence is underlined by the way he went kiting back to Scotland a little over a month after the establishment of the community. He left it with a paper organization, nearly a thousand inhabitants (strictly self-selected, with no consideration given to skills, character, or stability of personality) and his blessing and bland confidence that all was well. When he returned the following January, Owen was eager to push on to the ultimate objectives and a new declaration of

principles and articles of "union and co-operation" were drawn up. This "permanent" community provided, as Robert Dale Owen (the founder's son) said later: "liberty, equality, and fraternity in downright earnest." All officers were elective and the economic rule was share and share alike.

The first of several splinter groups found obscure fault with the new step and moved a few miles away to a new site. Most of the original members signed on with liberty, equality, and fraternity, but within two weeks the new executive committee was beseeching Robert Owen to take over as an extra-legal dictator. Thereafter the history of New Harmony follows a pattern that has been typical of secular utopias: dissensions, new starts, purges, splinter groups, ill-feeling between the industrious and the lazy, personal conflicts projected into matters of holy principle, and final disintegration. By the spring of 1828 it was apparent even to Robert Owen that the great experiment was over. It had lasted three years and cost him the bulk of his personal fortune. The nineteen Owenite communities which had sprung up independently in the East and the Middle West had somewhat shorter lives—the one at Yellow Springs being washed up in three months.

Many participants and observers have tried to diagnose the causes of New Harmony's failure. Owen himself thought that the false principles and wrong habits of ordinary society have too strong a hold on most people and render them incapable of the moral excellence required for community life. Most commentators agreed that the grab-bag character of the colonists would, by itself, have destroyed any such venture. Owen's successes at New Lanark had been with docile and beaten-down employees who were properly grateful and obedient. The New Harmony colonists have been described (by Horace Greeley) as

> for the most part . . . the selfish, the headstrong, the pugnacious, the unappreciated, the played-out, the idle, and the good-for-nothing generally, who, discovering themselves out of place, and at a discount in the world as it is, rashly conclude that they are exactly fitted for the world as it ought to be.

This comment has a strong invidious flavor and suggests that its author felt strongly about his *not* being "out of place and at a discount in the world as it is," but it underlines a problem that is basic to all reform and utopian movements. One of the most epigrammatic judgments came from one of John Humphrey Noyes' associates at Oneida: "Com-

munism must be ruled either by law or grace. [Owen] abolished law and did not employ grace."

The next rash of utopias came in New England in the 1840's and '50's. Its later stages were tied up with the popularization of the doctrines of Charles Fourier by Albert Brisbane, but some of the best known of the colonies—Brook Farm, Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands, and Hopedale—started before Fourierism became a fad. Brook Farm and Fruitlands had their spiritual origins in the splendid but noninstrumental verbalism called Transcendentalism. Hopedale had a somewhat similar background in the Universalist doctrines of Adin Ballou.

Fruitlands was the comic opera of the group. These solemn souls in their linen tunics not only abjured all "animal substances . . . flesh, butter, cheese, eggs, milk," stimulants, and warm water for washing, but they drew a moral distinction between fruits and vegetables which "aspired" upward and those wretched varieties which huddled in the ground. Animal manures were banned as corrupting the soil and introducing disease into the crops. Artificial lighting was to be limited to bayberry candles (which no one knew how to make) until Mrs. Alcott staged a successful rebellion for oil for her sewing lamp. The results of this sublime tomfoolery were as might be expected. The "consociate family" nearly starved when the New England winter closed in. It dwindled away until only Mrs. Alcott and her four little girls were left to cope with Father Alcott—who took to his bed to await the end.

Nearby Brook Farm was a cheerier, if less consecrated, place. It had more members and more capital and although its economy was no more self-sustaining in the long run than that of Fruitlands, its people ate regularly for five years. Brook Farm's fame has outlived that of the other utopias of its time partly because of the concentrated literary distinction of its sponsors and visitors and partly because—almost alone of its kind—it achieved a considerable success as a pleasant place to live. Most of the members were young and the school provided a steady turnover that kept down the growth of ingrown conflicts and splinter groups. The credo of leader George Ripley had balance as well as idealism and it sounds pretty good today.

> . . . to insure a more natural union between intellectual and manual labor than now exists; to combine the thinker and the worker, as far as possible, in the same individual; to guarantee the highest mental freedom, by providing all with labor adapted to their tastes and talents, and securing to them the fruits of their industry; to do away with the necessity of menial services by opening the benefits of education and the profits of labor to all; and thus to prepare a society of liberal, intelligent, and cultivated persons, whose relations with each other would permit a more wholesome and simple life than can be led amidst the pressure of our competitive institutions.

Brook farm was fun. They sang while washing dishes. They did the chores in lighthearted teams and were always getting up musicals and plays. They were notorious for their punning—a sure tipoff on a relaxed, if not downright anti-intellectual atmosphere. The priggish and righteous Charles Lane of Fruitlands (whom the little Alcotts cordially disliked) found them "playing away their youth and daytime in a miserably joyous, frivolous manner." Interestingly enough, in spite of youth, informality, and freedom there was never any sexual scandal associated with Brook Farm.

But if it was delightful it was also an economic fool's paradise. In spite of a ten-hour day the crops were nearly always less than the dining room consumed. A horse rake and a seed drill were all the farm machinery. They were poorly located for commerce with the outside world (two men and two wagons were kept busy full time). They piddled with handcraft industries but their lamps, coffeepots, doors, sashes, and blinds were uneconomically produced and ineffectively marketed. Their chief commercial success was in raising a total of $14,500 in first, second, and third mortgages on land originally valued at $10,500. When the new Phalanstery burned in 1846 (sloppy chimney construction and carelessness) the jig was up.

Longer-lived and better fed than these secular experiments, the American religious colonies are a study in themselves. Compared to their secular counterparts they were illiterate, undemocratic theocracies. They were governed by priesthoods, with visions, prophecies, and the revelation of heavenly enactment taking the place of group-process or parliamentary procedure. The typical secular community set up a press and issued a periodical; although the religious groups developed more handcraft and industrial enterprises, the printed word was seldom one of them (with the important exception of the Oneida Perfection-

ists). Without exception, the religious colonies practiced some form of deviation from the prevailing pattern of marriage and family.

Both the Rappites and colonists of Zoar were German emigrants who seceded from the worldliness of their native church and state. The followers of George Rapp practiced a primitive Christian communism, celibacy, and obedience to Father Rapp and his elders. During most of Rapp's lifetime, the community, in its several locations, was a model of harmony, neatness, and industry although visitors usually commented on the dullness and superstition of the people. Most of the theocratic colonies kept strictly apart from the sinful world and there is little record of fruitful contact with the secular utopias—although the more consecrated members of Fruitlands and Brook Farm sometimes moved on to the Shakers after disappointment with Transcendental society.

For pure social inventiveness and a blending of revolutionary thinking and living, John Humphrey Noyes' Oneida Perfectionists have a unique fascination. For over thirty years this group kept its identity in reasonable harmony, made a solid success of its economic life, and carried its experiments with marriage and the family to a point that has no near parallel in the America of its time (or of any previous or subsequent time).

Like so much of the social thinking of the time, the youthful trial flights of Noyes were set in a theological framework. (Very much the same way, perhaps, that the post-depression generations of college students have expressed their idealistic gropings in a neo-Marxist vocabulary of "social significance.") Theology simply happened to furnish the language and the frame of reference then employed. Noyes himself, in his *History of American Socialisms,* finds a close relationship between the utopian experiments and the great waves of revivalism that swept the country. The revival spirit furnished the zeal for salvation, the social ferment of the time suggested striking out from the *status quo* for a new way of living, and the biblical references to the community of the apostles gave hints for the social and economic pattern (Christian living and holding all things in common).

If any one trait can be said to have characterized Noyes it was the ability to follow his inner light wherever it led him—to follow it in sustained and concentrated fashion and to draw others with him. With

this stubborn intensity, of course, went an exceptional quality of mind and a sense of responsibility. What would have been mere eccentricity (or howling madness) in other social deviants, became luminous wisdom where Noyes was the initiator. Under his gentle but implacable shepherding, humble people committed themselves to undreamed-of new patterns of life; and the conflicts, heresies, and psychological impossibilities that any merely smart person could have predicted as inevitable consequences were smoothed away in harmony and faith.

Early in his youth, Noyes became convinced that to accept Christ completely in one's life was to become incapable of sin. This principle became elaborated into the doctrines of Perfectionism. The theology is less important than the supreme self-confidence involved. The kingdom of heaven was here and now for the taking and nothing in the positive stuff of life was to be rejected as unworthy. But there was never any slipshod laxity in Noyes' kingdom. Righteousness had to be constantly striven for—individually and by the combined energies of the group. One of the features of social life in the Oneida colony was the principle of "ascending and descending fellowship." Every member of the community was obligated to seek improvement from those above him in the spiritual hierarchy as well as to dispense it to those below. The problem of how Noyes himself was to participate in ascending fellowship was solved with some ingenuity. One of his children remembers seeing his father alone in his study, leaning back in a big chair with his eyes closed and his forehead wrinkling vigorously. The child was led away with the hushed explanation that his father was communing with the apostle Paul.

Early in the history of the Oneida group, the community more or less accidentally got into the manufacturing business. (One of the original New York State members was an Indian-trader and trapper and had developed a superior steel trap.) This enterprise expanded until Oneida Community traps were standard backwoods equipment all over the United States and Canada. Much of the community prosperity came from this participation in the growing industrial-commercial life of the country. Commercial printing and silverware were developed later and the latter industry is the chief reminder today of the experiment in human perfection. The Shakers, in contrast, built a large trade in handcraft wares, garden seeds, and preserved fruits, but they never ven-

tured into mechanized production. This use of factory production for a national market as a part of its economic base is another unique characteristic of the Oneida colony in contrast to the typically agricultural, and often starveling, status of the other utopias.

Although the Oneida Community was unquestionably Father Noyes' creation and existed in its pure form only during his prime, it had a large measure of internal self-sufficiency—a sort of intuitive democracy. Literacy and knowledge of the outside world were high, at least in comparison with the servile animism of the Rappites. The community library was always stocked with current periodicals and there seems to have been comparatively little of the anti-outside animus that drew the blinds around so many utopian attempts. The community children, it is true, were forbidden to have anything to do with outside children and stood in awe and fear of them. When community disintegration became visibly imminent, the older children went through a stage of near panic and two very ordinary newcomers to their group enjoyed immense prestige because they claimed to know the ropes of life on the outside.

One of the techniques which kept individuals in line with righteousness and group purposes was the institution of "criticisms." It was the custom for everyone to take his turn at being candidly dissected and improvingly admonished by a roomful of his fellows. The process was found to have excellent effects on both group solidarity and individual morale and there were sporadic attempts to apply it to more physical ailments, such as an epidemic of diphtheria. Probably every close-living group develops, consciously or not, some such device. It furnishes a constructive channel for the discharge of hostilities, erodes the sharp corners of individuality, and develops a tradition of acceptable community behavior. Some years ago when Louis Adamic visited the then-new Black Mountain College, he found that something of this kind was one of the most noticeable and educational features of its common life. A younger brother of Margaret Fuller used to liven things up at Brook Farm by his own version of criticisms: he confided his unfavorable opinions of people to his diary and occasionally tore out significant pages and left them lying around in prominent places.

III

All of the utopias have experimented with unorthodox relationships of work and property. Many of them were started primarily for economic reasons. Ever since the industrial revolution began to hit its stride, one of the factors which has brought people into utopian colonies has been a revolt against the conditions of life in our modern economy. Life in the going world has meant submergence in a consuming struggle for narrowly materialistic ends. This rat race has done nasty things to wholeness of personality and has often been asocial or antisocial in its larger effects. Life in a utopian colony, on the other hand, promises much in security, fellowship, and co-operation. The day-to-day life seems to offer economic relationships of a more complete and humanly satisfying kind than those of the mill and the marketplace.

Complications arise, however, when a utopian group sets about organizing its community work. A voluntary association seeking to escape the drudgeries and the mean compulsions of life in the big, bad world, has still to confront the compulsions of soil, weather, and season—or of production, price, and delivery. Ever since the self-sufficient economy of farm-handcraft-trade began to fade before the blitz of machinery-finance-specialization, there has been a conflict between human personality needs and the disciplines of the new system. These disciplines center around time, money, standardization, and specialization. If mass production is to work, men must work at specified times, at predetermined speeds, in specialized repetitive operations, and within fixed tolerances of accuracy.

There is little room within these disciplines for individual variation, spontaneity, or creativeness. You don't cut imaginative capers on the assembly line or improve on the blueprints as the fancy strikes you. Practically all the urgencies of individual living have to fit into the haphazard units of time that remain after working hours and their penumbra have been blocked out of the week. This regimen does grim things to human personality and it is not strange that individuals and groups try to escape it. The difficulty is that unless a utopian group is willing to pare down its life to a subsistence level (and thereby submit itself to an equally life-limiting set of compulsions), it has to compete in the general market to sell its goods and services. And then it is subject to the same old slavery of time and cost that it was trying to escape—

usually under the extra handicap of inadequate skill and capital equipment.

A process of humanizing industrial disciplines, however, seems to be getting under way—and its impetus is coming, not from back-to-the-soil movements, but from the advance guard of big business management. The work of Elton Mayo and his associates has established the revolutionary discovery that people work best when they work as members of a team. Even in repetitive manual work, low efficiency and obsessive delusions seem to result, not from monotony so much as from social unrelatedness. The axiom of classical economists (and of Karl Marx) that men are primarily motivated by economic self-interest, has been experimentally demolished. Men are far more strongly motivated by a sense of belonging and of functional importance. A great deal of "labor trouble" has been found to arise deviously from frustrations and social malfunctioning which had no economic cause whatever. Often the trouble stems from some slide rule genius doing too expert a job of "eliminating the human element."

It is beginning to be realized that jobs of work (which make up so much of all our lives) can be so organized as to provide for more creative participation and social fulfillment than they usually do. Even that something of the sort is good business. The self-made, hell-roaring executive is a diminishing type and techniques which encourage mature human relationships are in increasing demand in industry and business.

The time has passed, moreover, when social theorizers could discuss The Machine on a maybe-we'll-accept-it-maybe-we-won't basis. The all-around skills of the frontier—and the sparse populations—are gone, along with the game and the deep woods. We couldn't go back to a handcraft-agriculture economy without at least half of us starving—which would be a drastic beginning for a new era of humanized living. Given our bear-by-the-tail relation to industrial technology, the homesteading, extreme-decentralism philosophy becomes an individual eccentricity of no particular significance.

IV

Utopian groups derive much of their sustaining afflatus from the subordination of the individual to the group purpose. This was, and is, variously known as Christian communism, association, or co-operation and

it has a curious bipolarity. During the honeymoon stage, the individuals concerned have a feeling of release, freedom, and augmented personality. The individual self seems to have found fulfillment in its relation to the group. The honeymoon comes to an end, however, and as the individual needs for privacy, self-assertion, prestige, and possession are frustrated, the close associations become as annoying as they were previously exciting and liberating. If the reaction runs its full course, individual differences become blown up out of all normal proportion and the happy social oneness disintegrates into a chaos of mutually repellent individuals and cliques.

The utopias show this pattern—which in less extreme form is something of a human universal—so strikingly because the people who join up are, practically by definition, deviants of one kind or another from the larger society. They have rejected the common life—or been rejected by it, or both—and they are, at one and the same time, thorny individualists and people with a deep hunger to belong and to find a home. In the first happy days of a utopia they seem to have found it; they have their new associates for mutual reassurance and they have the outside world as a common target for hostility. But as time goes on and the outside world cares very little what the utopians think of it, it becomes a less and less satisfactory and unifying hostile obsession. At the same time, the utopia itself begins to settle into a pattern of social organization, controls, and pressures not so very different after all from the larger society it was abandoning. This is the point where the associates or co-operators begin to regress into antisocial individualism and community disintegration sets in.

But when all the absurdities, inefficiencies, and conflicts that have beset the utopias are tallied up, there remains an intangible personal balance on the positive side. For all its temporary nature and its instability, the taste of fellowship and wholeness that goes with the typical utopian experiment gives a glow and a promise to human life. It has catalytic effects on personality and it leaves its mark on the participant. Which is probably why the experiments are repeated in every generation in spite of the sorry record of waste and failure.

* * *

Of all the utopias in our history, Brook Farm seems to represent the pattern which can be most successfully imitated today. The requirements

seem to include a steady turnover in membership, a large proportion of unmarried young people, an outside source of income, and an idealistic group purpose which integrates rather than divides (but doesn't integrate too closely). These prerequisites are oftenest met by some form of educational institution, whether a college with an unusual program (like Black Mountain or Antioch) or a summer work-and-study camp or youth institute. Such educational groups have their most significant effects in maturing and integrating whole personalities rather than training isolated talents. They are notably lively and spontaneous places. And they run the same risks of social isolationism and internal explosion as the utopias. There seems to be a consistent pattern that determines the rise and growth of such groups. The original drive (what Noyes called the "afflatus") usually comes from a strong leader with qualities of Father and Prophet. This pattern of personal leadership sometimes continues through the lifetime of the founder, in which case, the group usually takes on some of the characteristics of the theocracies. Sometimes personal leadership generates an opposition group, with its own Father and Prophet—and the conflict situation which follows results in a splinter group.

The external relationships of such a group interact with the internal forces in complex ways. The group may go through cycles in which periods of high internal afflatus and revolutionary separation from the larger society alternate with periods of institutional inertia and comparative acceptance of the *status quo*. Educational groups seem to derive longer life-expectancy from their shifting and dynamic character. The coming and going, constant reappraisals of program, and the ebb and flow of internal factions supply the new blood, the interrelationship with outside forces, and the institutional dynamics which seem to be necessary to absorb the "afflatus" constructively and keep it from blowing the group apart.

Those dissident groups which are more in the nature of permanent colonies are apt to develop a higher degree of "in-groupism," to have less constructive give-and-take with the outside, and to either peter out dismally or live a narrow and rather irrelevant existence. Valuable work is being done today in such fields as city planning, decentralization, and community organization. The distinction between this kind of thing and the utopian seceders is important. It is the difference between idealism working with and through going society and idealism curdled into

an anti-society absolutism. The same diagnoses of what ails today's civilization may be found in each. The difference is in approach and personality pattern.

Another comparatively recent development which has absorbed some of the utopian tradition is the consumers co-operative movement. The co-ops are important because they are idealistic without being secessionists or abstainers. They aim to bring social direction and democracy into economic life by operating within the economy. In addition, they often perform much the same functions as the less evangelical churches. They provide a common body of idealistic doctrine, a center for social life, and an enterprise in which all may have a stake. Beyond this, they offer a way in which today's individual, submerged in bigness and anonymity, can, along with his neighbors, take a hand in the shaping of his own and the country's economic destiny. Because the co-ops are neither altogether idealism nor altogether bread-and-butter but a combination of the two, they are in a unique strategic position. Their idealism is tested by its survival in the marketplace and their business activities are checked for their content of social betterment.

Other than Brook Farm, our historical utopias contribute little positive experience that we can use directly today. Their principal value has been to demonstrate that a number of things won't work, or will work only under special conditions or extraordinary leadership. In the more somber cultural climate of our time we tend to set our sights considerably short of perfection. Which is not altogether a bad thing. We know better what individuals and society are up against and what is available to work with. Some of these limitations stand out sharply in the utopias. They show pretty clearly that problems of social organization and control are a human constant and are intensified rather than eliminated in a small group of seceded deviants. They show that a common doctrine strong enough to overwhelm self-assertion and family loyalties is apt to lead to a theocratic tyranny.

Probably the most useful and interesting findings from the utopias are in the relationships between social and individual behavior. All of the colonies which took the primitive Christians as their model—and to a lesser extent many of the secular groups—have made the assumption that hostility and conflict can be eliminated from human behavior. We have seen that the groups which were most successful in this direction

were also notable for priestly sanctions, illiteracy, and dullness. The groups which prized individual freedom and trusted to Reason rather than to God were more apt to come to explosive endings. Superficially it looks as if a close-living group shows an inverse ratio between harmony and individual freedom. The more freedom the less harmony and vice versa. If the factor of "closeness" is diminished, either the freedom or the harmony (or both) increase, also vice versa.

It would be possible to put these relationships into impressive mathematical notation. But it would still be superficial. Beyond a point, for instance, a lessening of "closeness" (an increase in elbow room puts it more clearly) produces neither harmony nor freedom but social chaos and individual disintegration. Also, there have been utopian groups which had a high degree of closeness and harmony *and* much more freedom than the formula would allow. The Oneida Perfectionists are the best example and they show that an important factor has been left out of the formula. Apparently the social apparatus of "criticisms," of ascending and descending fellowship, and the guidance of Father Noyes operated to inhibit the simple working of the ratio. There is also the factor of faith, which defies measurement but was certainly an important element at Oneida.

People who think of themselves as free agents inevitably develop frustrations and hostilities in their relationships with other people. In our culture this is intensified many times (if not largely caused) by the pervading competitive tradition. Some mechanism for the constructive discharge of these hostilities is necessary or some people are going to cease to be free. Democracy is the most hopeful form of social organization the race has developed because, at its best, it combines freedom and harmony in optimum amounts. One way of looking at our troubles today is that technology has increased our closeness—both spatially and by enforcing uniformities—and at the same time weakened our traditional social apparatus for sublimating hostilities. The result is less harmony and less freedom—so much less that some people are ready to chuck one or the other of them out of the formula completely.

V

Every utopian experimenter, whether religious or secular, has found that the individual family is an enemy of the community. There is a

conflict between loyalty to one's own flesh and blood and loyalty to the larger group. In religious terms it is a conflict of comfort, worldliness, and sensuality with spirituality and righteousness. In secular terms, selfishness and the competitive greed for possessions are tied to the identification of the individual with his family and are poison to the openhearted co-operation called for by the greatest good of the greatest number. The austere Charles Lane commented:

> The question of association and of marriage are one. If, as we have been popularly led to believe, the individual or separate family is the true order of Providence, then the associative life is a false effort. If the associative life is true, then the separate family is a false arrangement. . . . That the affections can be divided, or bent with equal ardor on two objects so opposed as universal and individual love, may at least be rationally doubted. . . . There is somewhat in the marriage-bond which is found to counteract the universal nature of the affections, to a degree, tending at least to make the considerate pause before they assert that, by any social arrangements whatever, the two can be blended into one harmony.

Robert Owen said that conventional marriage, with its bulwark of private property, was "one of the great trinity of evils which have cursed the world ever since the creation of man." Brook Farm was largely composed of unattached young people and this was probably a big factor in its human success. The summer camp groups, experimental colleges, bohemian clusters, and quasi-utopian colonies we have today are overwhelmingly made up of "youth" and a mixture of the over-age single and the survivors of shipwrecked marriages. A family, in effect, is an "in-group" all by itself, and its existence in a strong and integrated condition precludes participation in larger in-groups—participation, at least, with the all-out loyalty that utopias demand. Saint Paul was aware of this also; if we substitute "the community" for "God" in his discussion of marriage and its effects on a man's "cleaving unto" propensity, we have the conflict stated very much as it looked to the founders of utopias.

One answer was celibacy. The family ceased to exist when there were no sexual relationships and no children to be nurtured. This was the answer of the Shakers and the Rappites and the partial answer of the Zoarites. It was an answer that worked quite well under pioneer conditions, when backed up by strong religious leadership and social pressure. It required, of course, that new converts come in steadily enough to keep the group from dying off—the Shakers also adopted

wholesale lots of orphans. But the elders lost their authority in time and the young people were apt to elope (the Kentucky Shakers said they "fleshed-off"). There was a strong economic reason for the celibate answer, too. Building a colony in the wilderness required a high percentage of productive workers. A large part of the material prosperity which seemed to arise from the religious colonies was simply the result of having few children, nursing mothers, and old people eating up the common store without adding to it.

The polygamy of the Mormons was partly an attempt to assimilate into the family structure the excess of women that their missionary labors brought them. It extended the family to include several women and their children and, in so doing, it undoubtedly weakened the in-group strength of the family and made it more amenable to social controls. Like the "complex marriage" of the Oneida group, it was essentially a responsible social experiment, socially controlled and probably oftener a matter of duty than pleasure.

Noyes faced this problem with extraordinary forthrightness. He was aware of the family-community conflict and of the economic reasons for limiting births in a pioneer colony. He could not agree with the Shakers and the other celibates, however, that sexual love was either inherently bad or in opposition to spiritual virtue. He solved the problem, in effect, by enlarging the family to make it identical with the community. When he was still a young man (and a virgin) Noyes expressed in a private letter his conviction that exclusive monogamy was an error and that complete sexual freedom was both rational and desirable. Through no intention on the author's part, this letter was published and Noyes became a notorious public figure overnight. But even in this youthful tentative approach to the question, Noyes emphasized a corollary to his belief in freedom: holiness must come first. ("Woe to him who abolishes the law of the apostacy[1] before he stands in the holiness of the resurrection.")

This insistence on holiness (for which read responsibility, respect for individual personality, and conformity to community pressures) was

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[1]Noyes's word, as quoted in *A Yankee Saint* by Robert Allerton Parker. It seems likely that "apostalcy" was the word he originally used. "Apostacy" makes no great sense in the context. The notion that the Perfectionists, however, were re-establishing the community of the apostles (as a sort of half-way station to the resurrection) was a favorite one in Noyes's doctrine.

always an essential part of complex marriage. The outside world imagined that Perfectionist life was a round of shameless license, but the near neighbors of the community knew better. One of the few members who ever succeeded in geting into the community with the idea that it would be a happy hunting ground for amorousness left it suddenly one evening when the elders heaved him out of a window into a snow bank. Not that he had been greatly successful in his hunting (he hadn't) but because he was an intolerable nuisance.

A study of Oneida indicates, among other things, how nonexistent a goal absolute freedom really is. The Perfectionists had painfully freed themselves of the restraints of monogamy, of exclusiveness, of jealousy and hypocrisy. But they achieved these freedoms only by accepting the guidance of the community as to their love lives. They might be, and were, under pressures to love or not to love as the elders deemed proper. And they were not free to form exclusive attachments even if both parties wanted it that way. The "idolatrous" individual love affair became as much of a menace to the family-community as its opposite was in the outside world—more of a menace, in fact. Even the children were discouraged from spending too much time with any one friend. The freedoms achieved at Oneida, moreover, were possible only in the isolated protection of the Mansion House. The outside world had to be kept at arm's length or better and it was pressure from society at large which eventually precipitated abandonment of complex marriage and the disintegration of the community.

In the early years of the community it was agreed that children would be a serious economic liability and they were deliberately postponed—by another Noyes discovery which he called "Male Continence," details of which can be left to medical journals but which seemed to work, however incredible it may seem today. As the group became prosperous enough to afford children, a deliberate program of breeding superior quality was undertaken. They called it "stirpiculture" and in many ways it was the culmination of the whole venture toward perfection. There was no science of genetics in their time and they thought, or hoped, that the wisdom, the self-control, and the perfection of their best members could be passed on intact to their offspring. It was a major disappointment when the stirpicultural babies turned out to be only a normal, and unusually healthy, batch of kids. They were excellent young speci-

mens but the perfectionist doctrines had not penetrated to the genes and it was evident that the whole community experiment had to be lived through by each new generation—and without Noyes to guide them they might not find the one true path.

VI

Throughout this discussion we have been assuming that the "larger society" is worth preserving. A great many utopians would disagree. They would maintain that the soullessness and the mechanized mediocrity of our culture (or the coercion and militarism of our national state) are both intolerable and doomed and that some form of secession is the only possible answer for an individual of integrity. This attitude, as we have seen, is especially strong among pacifists—and we have looked into its sources. Similar attitudes can be found in other unhappy groups of social dissidents, and for similar reasons.

But the real question demands an honest answer. If the going concern of modern life *is* hopelessly corrupt and fated to disintegration and collapse, the seceders and the utopiacs may be right after all.

This concept of the "larger society" needs working over. It seems to involve three major elements: first, our social inheritance of mores, customs, values, and incentives—our culture pattern; second, the evolving structure of industry and business and the economic and social pressures it generates; third, the mechanisms of government and law. Obviously these categories are abstractions and are mixed and interacting in practice. The justification for separating them is that conflicts between them are always incipient and become vividly apparent in periods of crisis and transition.

During most of American history, all three elements have worked together well enough to avoid total breakdowns and to steadily augment the physical strength of the nation—with the exception of the Civil War, which split all three of them down the middle. The most persistent source of conflict has been an accelerating divergence between the traditional values of the culture pattern and the drive of the economy. Consequently, liberal reform has usually invoked the traditions of democracy, equality of opportunity, and freedom against the anti-democratic, monopolistic, and restrictive forces attributed to Big Business or Wall Street. The political government has been the battlefield—the area where these conflicts

are fought out and the resultant balance is codified. The situation is complicated by the fact that the culture pattern has itself been changed (and violently changed) by the social consequences of the economic drives. The muckraking and reform uprisings of the 1900-1914 period may have represented the last concerted assertion of the traditional culture pattern. The First World War intervened and the following generation was too absorbed in giving its Fords a valves-and-carbon job to notice, or care, what was happening to the country. By the time the great conflict of the '30's was here, the culture pattern had become taut with stresses.

Idealistic dissent in American life has been a revolt against all three elements of the larger society but in varying proportions at different times. The most effective reform efforts have been made by those who accepted the basic premises of the culture pattern and directed their fire against the economic forces and their domination of the political machinery. Some of the most vocal dissenters have been primarily rebels against the culture pattern itself and its restraints on individual freedoms and variations from social norms. On the face of it, it looks as if this kind of rebellion had been extraordinarily successful. But the real damage to the traditional culture has come from the environmental changes wrought by economics and these dissenters have really won both a phony and a frightening victory.

Today's dissenters—of the kind who make pilgrimages to utopian colonies—have frequently rejected all three of the elements of the larger society. They are free spirits who scorn the normative customs of society; they want no part of modern business and industry; and, often enough, they remove themselves as far as they can from any participation in, responsibility for, or allegiance to the forms and usages of government and politics. This social alienation can easily set up a closed circle of motivation, in which an original rebellion (often merely a normal phase of adolescence) becomes reinforced by isolation and in-group ideology until the individual may come to have an overwhelming spiritual stake in the collapse of the larger society. Which is not a healthy state of affairs for either society or its dissenters.

Historically, it is easy to see now that our prophets of social doom have been largely wrong in the past. American society, with all its inequalities, injustices, and inhumanities has deviously achieved a higher standard of living, greater literacy and individual opportunity, and

vastly improved public health (life expectancy, at least, is undeniable by those who might argue about "health"). To take a less materialistic field, the civil liberties situation, as of the time of writing, is far better than in 1920. The picture is never simple but it seems safe to say that the processes of integration, freedom, and life in this country have more than held their own over those of chaos, tyranny, and death. America has shown a capacity to meet crises by its own special brand of muddling through which gives little support to prophets of despair.

Our national future has, of course, become inextricably linked with that of the whole world and many people find the problems now thrust upon us beyond hope of solution. Certainly our larger society would preserve only a dubious residue of flexibility or humanity after an atomic war. Conceivably, life on this planet could reach a situation in which all large-scale social organization broke down and the forming of isolated little communities offered the only means of keeping the race and the memory of civilization alive. These would not be utopias, of course, but wretched huddlings-together for survival. (The very concept of utopia seems to require a larger going concern as a takeoff point.)

Fundamentally, allegiance to the larger society is a religious faith. In our culture it is based on the common humanity underlying differences of creed, politics, color, or class; it affirms that life is a serious and responsible business, that every individual is a unique sort of miracle to be respected as such, and that good and evil are real. *It also recognizes that personality is partly a social product, that society both restricts and sustains, and that both functions are essential.* It is this common faith which provides the network of decency and predictability which holds us together. Within it, conflict and diversity can churn around to good evolutionary effect and the keeping off of dull times. But setting out to slice through it to a position of greater freedom or moral purity on the outside is risky business.

Those of us who stay with the larger society can maintain that the problem is a common one—just as a final extermination would be a common one—and that those who reject the inheritance we bring to bear on it are not helping to solve it. It is one life as well as one world. Our inadequate personalities and institutions, our baggage from the past, and the mess we have made to date are what we have to start from and work with. We can't escape from or transcend any of it.

A STORY

THE NEW POWER

By THEODORA ILLENBERGER

HE WAS STILL HALF ASLEEP, but he heard the door opening and the sound of Mae's heels slapping against the bare floor. Immediately he was completely awake, his body tensed against her. When her heels muffled in the rug beside the bed, he opened his eyes and rumbled half-formed words in her direction. She stood there indecisively, and he held himself rigid. Sometimes she shook him, anyway, just to make sure. Today, though, she shrugged and started back to the other room. He closed his eyes and listened, as he had for weeks now, to the difference in her footsteps coming and going. When she knew he was awake, her steps were slower, her heels dragging in a weary shuffle.

He lay there a little longer, anything to postpone getting up and going into the sloppy kitchen, listening to her complaints, eating the greasy food she would slap in front of him once she knew he wasn't heeding her. He turned towards the window. The shade didn't meet the windowsill, but he couldn't be certain what sort of day it was. It looked grey enough to be ready to rain, though every late afternoon in November was apt to look the same.

He had to get up. He had to be at the station house in a little over an hour, but staying in bed like this cut down the time he would have to spend in the house. On the way to the bathroom he glanced in the livingroom. Mae was making a show of dusting the floor behind the chairs, but he could tell from the overflowing ashtray that she'd been reading one of her magazines and had become busy only after she waked him. Damn it all, he thought, four o'clock was no time for housework. Her little act just didn't impress him.

He kept the irritation all the time he washed and shaved and took it with him when he sat down at the kitchen table. For once, though, Mae was quiet, busy at the stove. He looked out the window past the

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flower pots with their withering plants, past the clothes hanging limply on the line to the wall of the house opposite. It wasn't much for the eye to see, but it was better than watching Mae.

She put a plate in front of him, moved off to fill his coffee cup. He sat there, making no motion to pick up his fork. As she came back with the coffee, she sensed his lurking anger and sucked in her breath sharply. They both looked down at the plate with the bacon still showing white blisters of fat, at the brown-edged eggs, the potatoes shiny with grease and speckled with pepper.

She turned on her heel and walked in the livingroom. He twisted in his chair to see what she was doing, but she was just standing there, her back toward the kitchen. "What's the matter now?" he shouted, wanting a more excited response. "In a sulk again?"

She turned then. The prettiness was gone from her face, its softness marred by the harshness of her effort at control. "I decided today, just once, we wouldn't fight." Her shoulders sagged so that they made her thin body look sickly and old. "I figured if I didn't say anything, you couldn't get mad."

"You figured! Since when were you smart enough to figure anything right?" He sent the plate crashing into the coffee cup, and the lightish liquid slopped back and forth and splashed over into the saucer.

She took a step or two backward when he lurched to his feet, but he walked past her to the bedroom. She looked at the kitchen table with the untouched food and then through the bedroom door. Standing where she was, but somehow suggesting flight, she asked, "Aren't you going to eat? After I fixed it?"

He didn't answer her. She went nearer the door, and her voice was stronger. "It's a sin to waste food like that. With prices the way they are."

He didn't move, but she knew he was listening. His silence forced the tears which were always near the surface now. She fished in her pocket for a handkerchief, found none and walked carefully past him to the dresser for the tissues. His eyes, slitted in disgust, watched her.

"Get out of here." His voice was low, almost a whisper.

She looked up at him, her face already mottled. "Ed," she said imploringly.

"Get out," he repeated, his voice no louder.

She didn't look at him again, but clattered to the door, her ankle twisting in her haste. He was breathing heavily and swung his arms in aimless arcs, trying to dispel the excess violence still in his blood.

She was always crying. She had cried when she saw him get off the boat. Of course, that was natural enough. She hadn't seen him for almost two years and before that only when he had a furlough. But she'd kept on crying. She cried every time anything went wrong. He despised it and felt impelled to force her tears.

He hadn't remembered her like that, that was the funny thing. All those months he had been in the occupation forces he hadn't once thought of Mae as crying. He'd even picked up one girl because she'd looked cute and tricky, the way he had remembered Mae. That was the one he'd had the fight with Sid about.

She had said she had no place to take him so he had taken her to the home where Sid and he were billeted, not hiding her or sneaking her in, but sitting for a while right in the parlor with the old couple. They hadn't said anything, didn't dare. They knew their place. Of course, they had found an excuse to go to the kitchen, but that had just made him and the girl laugh. Sid, though, had given him hell.

The crazy thing was, Sid would never have anything to do with the old people. He was always polite, said thankyou and goodmorning, but the rest of the time he ignored them. But he, Ed, had sometimes come in feeling good and made the old man share some beer while they talked about America. Of course, he was a pompous old windbag with a beard like dirty snow, but that didn't bother Ed. He was nothing more than an assistant hausfrau. Ed used to shout out an order just to watch him scurrying around. They were both like that and, underneath, he liked them for it. They knew their place; they knew when an American soldier wanted ham, he got ham. The old man used to walk miles out in the country to get him fresh butter.

If there were more of those kind of people over here, it would be all to the good. He remembered with fond hunger the breakfasts he used to get in that house. Not the greasy stuff Mae shoved at him. Real American pancakes, hunks of butter, fat sausages, clean linen at every meal. They treated him like a king.

Ed sighed and came back to Third Avenue. He was hungry and now he'd have to stop somewhere to eat. He picked up his holster and for a

minute held it, a solid weight, in his hand while he allowed a smile to break through his discontent. That was the best part of being a cop. It was almost like the army when the war was over. He buckled it around him, pulling it tight against his stomach so that he would be conscious of the pressure.

He walked out of the house without speaking again to Mae. Let her stay in what she probably thought was a pathetic little heap, and maybe he'd get a decent breakfast tomorrow.

It wasn't raining, after all. He had forgotten his worry about the weather once he had let Mae get under his skin. There was a dampness, though, and he stood for a minute tasting the faint saltiness of the air.

Out of the corner of his eye he saw the little girls jumping rope, saw them look up at him and move to the far side of the sidewalk. He let his glance wander to the corner, careful not to betray any interest, and the boy standing under the awning of the candy store abruptly held his cigarette out of sight. That was a trick he'd learned when he was stationed in Germany. Let them know you were sure of yourself, sure that they would behave. He'd watched the Germans edge to the side of the road when they saw his uniform, break their bread lines to let him through, and it wasn't any different with the kids here.

Satisfied, he went down the three steps and strode along the street until he came to the bakery. It was busy at this hour, women lined up at the counter, edging in on one another. Around the tables at the far side of the store were people with the look of rooming houses clinging to them. He swung open the door and headed, without looking at anything but the space directly ahead, for a table near the window. He didn't bother looking at the menu but stared at the back of the waitress standing at the dumbwaiter.

When she turned and saw him, she hurried to his table, letting the others wait. "Breakfast this afternoon?" she asked and laughed at her joke.

"What's good?"

"Liver? Lots of people eat liver for breakfast."

"Never heard of it," he said. "How's about bacon?"

"All out, but I got some ham that's supposed to be for tomorrow."

He didn't thank her, just nodded. He loosened his belt, drawn too tight now for comfort and then looked at the people around him. He

surprised once or twice an unfriendly stare, quickly hooded, the kind he got sometimes when he pushed in the center door of a bus. Those were the people to watch, the ones with the resentful eyes.

He ate slowly, savoring each bite of the ham, washing it down with the dark coffee. The waitress came back with a second cup without his asking. He was going to ignore her again, but he caught sight just then of the owner. He was ringing up change at the cake counter, but his eyes were following the girl, the lines of her breasts as she lifted the tray, the knobby knees under the short skirt. Stupid old goat, the girl was too young for him. Ed put out his hand and squeezed her arm. He could feel her draw slightly away, then relax under his strength. She smiled at him, but it was a nervous smile, made even weaker by the startled flutter of her lashes.

He went ahead, his eyes always on the owner who kept his head down now that he knew Ed was watching. "Going out with me some night soon?"

The girl kept the smile on her face. "How long do you think I'd keep my job going out with married men?"

Ed loosened his hold on her and flicked at her wrist with his thumbnail so that she jerked back involuntarily. "Scared of the old man?"

She shook her head, but still she looked toward the counter. Ed turned his head away contemptuously, gulped the rest of the coffee and then fished in his pocket for a nickel. He wanted her to get the full effect of the miserly tip, but the girl had rushed to a rear table as soon as he had released her. When it was plain she wasn't coming back, he put the nickel in his pocket and shoved his way out of the bakery.

She was a silly fool, he told himself. He hadn't wanted to take her out, her or any girl, but the old man had annoyed him. He'd have to find someplace else for breakfast now, and the weather didn't help his mood. The air had seemed fresh and new, almost like country air when he had left his house, but now the cool dampness had changed to a drizzle and people hurrying home, hurrying to the movies, left their meaningless footprints plainly on the half-wet sidewalk.

Now it was the weather that was his enemy. It seeped into his consciousness, blotting out the crowded bus, fogging even his thoughts. He swayed with the bus, jerked with its stops and was only dully glad when he got off. The streets were shiny now with the rain and people jostled

past him, heedless of his uniform. Purposely he slowed his steps, strolled with his head up to meet the dampness.

He hated it, though, thinking of the night ahead, feeling already the damp chill of his beat. For a man with war service, he'd been handed a raw deal.

He glanced resentfully at the squad cars outside the station. They had it easy. Cruising around, stopping for beer or coffee whenever they felt like it.

The locker room when he went downstairs for his raincoat was heavy with the smell of men, their tobacco and the mustiness of wet uniforms. Ed dropped his cigarette to the floor and scrubbed it out with his foot. A couple of the men looked at him and then away again.

Russell, the six-footer who had just gotten a departmental citation, came in. Ed kept his eyes busy on the buckles of his raincoat, but Russell could never let him alone.

"Hi, Captain!" he shouted and laughed that great bellow of his. The other men smiled.

Ed wanted to shout back, "All right, so I wasn't a captain, but what were you doing?" He knew better. He'd tried it once and Russell had said airily, "Home duty, my boy." And somehow from him it wasn't a shirker answering. Ed didn't know why. Now he contented himself with lifting a hand in greeting and damning Russell in his mind.

He wondered, as he often had in the past few weeks, why he was on the force. It had seemed such a good idea when he first got home. It would be, he had thought, almost like the army. He had really fitted in there, felt at home in the uniform, sure and ruthless in his actions, and he had imagined that life continuing in the uniform of a policeman. Somehow, though, the force had failed him.

He went out with the others, avoiding the ones who were getting in the cars. It still wasn't raining hard, just enough to make his rubbers squeak in the dampness. An ambulance clanged past, and he thought enviously of the excitement, the rush through startled streets, a path always cleared ahead.

As he walked, the thought of Germany came back to him. A rainy night like this and he would have been in a warm, dry place. With people who treated him with respect. People who understood authority, his authority, and acted accordingly.

Some ten-year-olds ran past him, one of them blowing a crescendo alarm on his whistle. Ed reached out and held him by the coattails. The boy squirmed under his hand, and Ed looked at his face for the first time, almost casually as though they were passing in the street. There was surprise in the boy's face but no fear.

"Give that whistle here," he said, suddenly angry that the boy was not afraid. The boy held it out hesitantly, and he knocked it from his hand into the gutter. "Now get home." The boy walked a few steps, looked back at him, glanced down at the whistle shining under the street light.

Ed stood there, his feet planted wide apart, his eyes daring the child to protest. The look of bewilderment on the boy's face gave way to a malicious pleasure, and he blew a bubble with his gum, cracking it loudly as he turned to run. Ed took a step forward to catch him, then stopped. He could hear Russell's laughter if he brought a kid to the desk for blowing a whistle.

The restlessness and dissatisfaction were worse than ever. He tried walking fast, putting his heels down with a sharp click, but the overshoes deadened the sharpness. He stood in a doorway then and waited for a car to pass the red light, but tonight even the cabs respected the lights. He started walking again. Columbus Avenue stretched out before him, the housetops fading into the rain and darkness. It was less drear with the street lamps shining mistily and the red and green signals making clean, sharp splashes of color, but it was still dull, the gloom held back only by the noise and rush of traffic.

A little way ahead an old woman teetered on the edge of the sidewalk, her chin tilted high as though to help her see. A car splashed close to the sidewalk, and she took a couple of quick steps backward and looked up and down the street with its distant, hurrying figures.

Ed was in the shadow of a warehouse and she didn't see him at first. He watched her, hoping the lights would change before he caught up with her, but a headlight picked him out and immediately she called, "Officer."

He went up to her, hating her for the favor she was going to ask, hating himself for being there. "Want to get across?" he asked quickly. He didn't want to hear the whine he knew would be in her voice or the plea of helplessness. Get her across and he would be alone again. He took

her arm, hurrying her through the puddles, disregarding the cars. Her breath was coming in short gasps, and her short legs trotted to keep up with his exaggerated stride.

As soon as she stepped on the sidewalk, he dropped her arm and started back down the street. Even the bus backfiring at the corner did not drown out her thanks, her voice more bewildered than thankful.

He cracked his stick against a hydrant and felt the thud travel from his fist up to his shoulder. He looked in the darkened stores now as he passed, hoping for something to be wrong. He could feel the power in his shoulders, in his free-swinging arm. There was decision in the thrust of his legs. And what did he do with it? Help old women across streets. First thing he knew, he'd have his picture in the paper for rescuing kittens.

He looked down the next side street. A couple was hurrying away from the park, hunched under the same umbrella. Otherwise, it was deserted. The row after row of high steps stretched to the brighter lights of Central Park West. He walked halfway down the block, peering into dark basement courts. Sometimes young punks used the darkest ones, but there was nothing. He turned and went back to Columbus, back to rattling door knobs, looking in fruit stores and cobbler shops, seeing once a cat dart away, stirring in him briefly the hope of action.

The water was squelching out on each side of his shoes as he walked, making tiny splashes. He put his feet down more heavily to make the splash larger, then lifted his head from the childish game. He stopped in a doorway, letting his eyes follow the rain reflected against the street light. The bright halo fascinated him, shut out the long, wet stretch of street. It was as golden and pretty as a girl, he thought, and a prick of discontent touched his mind. He turned in disgust from the light as he would from a reluctant woman.

He shifted restlessly in the doorway, unwilling to go out again into the rain even to the warmth of the nearest hamburger stand. He was held in a vise of unhappiness. He remembered the rainy night about a year ago when the jeep he had been driving had made great curving sheets of the gutter water and the way he'd maneuvered it so that he could aim them accurately over the sidewalks.

He was about to turn back downtown and stop for coffee when he caught sight of a man standing in the doorway not far from him. The

dull light hanging over the window full of cheap rings and watch straps was not strong enough to do more than outline him. Ed straightened his shoulders, the rain disregarded now in sudden purposefulness, and he edged along the buildings toward the jewelry store. As he came abreast, the man turned his face to him. Ed went forward more rapidly after he saw his face.

There was suspicion and conviction at once in his voice when he asked, "What do you mean, hanging around here?"

Immediately into the waiting figure of the Negro there grew a tenseness. "Gettin' in out of the rain," he said thinly.

"And into a jewelry store." There was contempt in Ed's voice.

The man looked at the window beside him as though just aware of what it contained and then back at Ed. He made no answer.

"Move along. You don't belong here."

The man moved imperceptibly. "Waiting for my girl," he said.

Ed pointed the nightstick in his direction. "When a cop tells you to move, move."

The man was shoved into quick speech. "She'll be along any minute. She works over there." He nodded toward Central Park West. "She'll be along. Wait an' see."

Ed was clutching and unclutching the stick hanging at his wrist. He took firm hold of it. They didn't know their place, any of them, and now a black man dared argue with a cop. "Get going," he said, finality lowering his voice.

The man moved forward to leave the doorway, but Ed was blocking the way. As he twisted sideways to pass, Ed poked his nightstick in his ribs, and the Negro jerked backward, his arm thrown out to protect himself. His hand just grazed the wide sweep of raincoat. Ed felt the old power running up his arm, so strong that it made his heart beat faster for a moment. He raised his arm, brought down the stick once and then again. The man sprawled on the wet sidewalk, the rain beating little drums of triumph on his still body.

Ed didn't move, and the nightstick dangled easily at his wrist. He stared at the man, his eyes bright with excitement. The dissatisfaction was gone. He felt himself towering over the crowd that had run down from the warm, lighted homes, that collected from the dark streets where no one had been before.

A squad car pulled up, and Ed walked toward it confidently, sure for the first time in many months of a path being cleared before him, of the importance of his uniform.

WILLIAM JAMES AND THE MODERN MOOD

By JANE MAYHALL

THE NAME OF WILLIAM JAMES is being heard again at cocktail parties and in the college classrooms. It comes up in connection with the current philosophy called Existentialism. It is not usually mentioned with approval, for reasons that seem to do James great honor. I propose in this paper to show that James gives us as sure and practicable a philosophy of the human predicament as one can have. My generation both rebels against and rationalizes it. Because this paper is concerned with the image of James as today's young intellectual draws it, let me first of all call attention to the various kinds of opposition which James's ideas have evoked during the past few years. Such opposition is natural for it is aroused by any force which challenges the prevailing mental fashions. If, as A. N. Whitehead has suggested, "William James's pragmatism was as much a revolution in thought as Francis Bacon's experimentalism and was, like Bacon's method, the beginning of a new era in human thinking,"[1] it follows surely that there are plenty of fashionable minds that yet have trouble (and make trouble) getting used to William James.

Van Wyck Brooks, who tried hard to appreciate the James type of vitality, found himself in 1932 so troubled by James's revolutionary ideas that he was forced to write an essay blaming the "golden man and poet" for the deterioration in American values. Although James was to Brooks golden, lovable, and magnetic, nevertheless Brooks was afraid tha James had taken too many liberties with philosophical speculation and was leading the American people back into the wilderness from which they had just emerged. In other words, despite his charm and talent, the father of pragmatism (Charles Peirce repudiated paternity;

[1] *A Century of Hero Worship* by Eric Bentley.

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perhaps he was its mother) was literally destroying ethical morality and leaving the American mind to its own devices which, compared to the European (Brooks reminded us) were hopelessly low-class. It is an old story now, the Brooks tale of moral and cultural persecution, his dislike not only of James but of all forms of radical or unusual thinking (including finally the very "Europeans" he had once revered for a "tough sense" of value). However, this kind of objection to James still persists and plays a prominent role in current discussions having to do with moral matters.

But most intellectuals between twenty-five and forty-five are probably better acquainted with James's more formidable enemies: our own snobbish pessimists of the 1940's. A strong breath of pessimism, which, expirated from the popular philosophic and literary bodies of both yesterday and today, pervades the intellectual atmosphere, seems to this generation, particularly, quite natural and even perversely pleasant. Those who live in such pleasantness do so because there is a certain prestige connected with their point of view. People are, somehow, respectful of dark thoughts and look up to those who carry a conception of the "tragedy" of existence. Such people cannot but regard William James, therefore, as superficial and insensitive to the ecstasies of spiritual frustration, i.e., in the true Schopenhauerian sense, the will doomed to privation, and striving because it is and remains unfulfilled. I want to show in this essay, in part at least, that James was quite aware of such conceptual phenomena but was not deceived by their psychological ingredients. Unlike the "realistic" thinkers of our time, he saw that although men have very real conceptions of their *world as idea,* these images need not be fatal to personality, but may be changed if they so wish or need to.

As I read William James, he was extremely contemporary to our turbulent time. His earlier years were lived in a quickened and cosmopolitan atmosphere which was, in a number of ways, not unlike the mental environment of our own restless generation. He was born the unquiet son of an unquiet father. Certain aspects of his schooling resembled, to a remarkable degree, phases of progressive education. Henry James, the elder, the father of the to-be philosopher, encouraged his sons (there were three of them, and a daughter) to think for themselves and to express their ideas with a maximum of freedom. James's father, a man who described himself as one having "patient habits of meditation,"

as one who "never knows disgust or weariness," as one who felt a "force of impulsive love toward all humanity which will not let me rest wholly mute"—this man certainly established in his sons a wholly *un*-mute habit of being, a profound talkativeness which was later to carry William in the radiant word-streams of philosophy and the younger Henry into the exquisite verbosity of the James novels.

The father of William James was a Swedenborgian theologian (so-called, since he deviated greatly from that authority) who wrote and thought a great deal but was never read by many people, even among his personal associates. Severely injured in his youth, he lived an existence of handicap. Having lost a leg in an accident at the age of thirteen, and being subjected to terrible and prolonged pain, he yet established not only a "right" relationship with the world again, but also a consciously philosophical one. His mental vigilance, nourished by constant study and reflection, must have played a profound and sometimes difficult part in the lives of his children. This too must have heightened personal relations and given an unusual prominence to individual problems.

Strongly united by family ties, the James family yet branched out, traveled a good deal, going from America to Europe and back again, staying not long in any one place, the restlessness of their movements throwing the boy William into dramatic collision with places and people and ideas. Being so intellectually receptive to contrasts, the young James early acquired a wide as well as deep consciousness—the power to make, as he called it, "international comparisons."

From the age of thirteen to eighteen, Willam James studied in Europe. The instructions were discontinuous, but he had opportunity for acquaintance with English and French reviews, books, paintings, and public affairs. Returning to Newport, Rhode Island, he began to study painting with John La Farge. After a year of this, he decided to trade art for science and in 1863 entered Harvard University. There he began to study medicine. His work was constantly interrupted by bad health, whose physical trials were much accentuated by an extreme psychological sensitivity. The story of his illness is an exciting one and merits some enquiry, particularly on the part of today's modern problem people, the despondent intellectuals of the 1940's. Living at a time when one still felt quite strongly the intellectual vibrations due to the clash of tran-

scendental optimism with the new realistic perception of the natural world, it can only be imagined that the emotional decision which James had to make was of the most harrowing kind. The conflicts which he experienced could not have been casual. Nor could they have been solved by any capricious fatalism or convenient optimism.

On the personal level, the fundamental change in direction (whose occasion was James's illness) was as dynamic an incident in a man's life as can be imagined. During the experience he had a sense of panic and terror, the kind of isolated feeling that the modern intellectuals so often boast of. To accept as natural that consciousness *de profundis,* and yet to relate it effectively to the rationalistic world, this was indeed a strenuous task! The passing of that crisis, the movement of a superbly trained mind from the realm of a most private fear and predetermined "hypochondria" (as he chose to describe it) into a world of free will, set James at the threshold of his career as a philosopher. The letter he wrote, describing that process of inner rehabilitation, would equal any of the best modern literature on the subject today—the quality of perception and despair being at least on a par with the currently honored Kafka and Kierkegaard. And yet, unlike Kafka and Kierkegaard, James was not of the mind to maintain that mien of despair. For, in some way, it did not suit James aesthetically to limit himself to the qualities of mind which fashioned despair. His reaction to his own despondency is perhaps an attitude closely connected with his later concept of "the ultimate philosophy" as expressed in his essay, "The Sentiment of Rationality." There he says, "The ultimate philosophy, we may . . . conclude, must not be too straitlaced in form, must not in all its parts divide heresy from orthodoxy by too sharp a line. There must be left over and above the propositions to be subscribed, *ubique, semper, et ab omnibus,* another realm into which the stifled soul may escape from pedantic scruples and indulge its own faith at its own risks. . . ." James's type of faith was apparently one to be focused on the "over and above." Psychologically speaking, it was compounded of as much scientific curiosity as human hopefulness. Whether he referred to it as the "unconquerable subjectivity" or "the crepuscular depths of personality," its function was the same.

Being an artist by nature, with the abundant enthusiasms as well as the critical objectivities of the artist, his deepest intent was not only to perceive items and ideas honestly, but to handle and *use* them, to bring

them into visible form, that is to enjoy as well as to suffer by them. Kafka, whose work is having such a boom in the informed circles today, was on the other hand concerned only with man's martyrdom to the injustices of circumstances and seems therefore quite limited, aesthetically and even philosophically. (I mention Kafka here because, although he was a novelist, his novels are so consciously allegorical that their effect on the reader is most often of a philosophical nature, an effect of idea rather than person or place.) In both philosophy and literature, it appears that Kafka and the Kafka advocates intend not to arrange their crises into a practicable pattern but rather to repeat the crisis again and again (if they can), to describe the "difficulty" so often and so dogmatically that their problems cease to have any real objective meaning. In our times, such devotion to despair shows an incredible lack of imagination.

II

William James was not interested in repeating the same type of crisis. The situation had occurred at the time in his life when he doubted that life was worth living, when all the faculties of thought strove toward utter nihilism. And yet, his basic reaction was one of new interest, a pleasurable seeing of a different conception of philosophy, the positing of life being in the "self-governing resistance of the ego to the world." The sheer defiance asserted in that point of view was the catalyst which liberated all of his qualities of creativity, which provided him with one of the very philosophies of creativity: the philosophy of pluralism. To explain this heave of the will, his revived interest, one would have to refer to two strong characteristics in James. One was his spontaneous delight in living, the other was his ability to reason. And this duo-talent, improvising and variating on significant themes, establishes for us a practical philosophic structure by which life may survive and thought be advanced.

Looking at what James says about the will in *The Will to Believe* several years after, we get an insight into the problems of his survival drive. He anticipates our human unwillingness to consciously make the survival effort: "It seems preposterous to talk of opinions being modifiable by will." It is clear to him that one cannot force faith willfully nor adopt it by such mechanical means as mental calculation. This method of achieving belief would lack the inner "soul" of reality. In order for the

belief to have some character and life, there must be some *pre*-existing tendency. Now (and this is James's initial and lasting optimism!) when James talks of the "pre-existing tendency," he is simply speaking of the survival drive which is natural to all living things, which is, indeed, a very inner definition of life. And when he goes on to say that the pre-existing tendency shows itself as alive and passional only when it is of *use* (directly or indirectly) to our needs, he is showing us where and when the strongest survival passions exist: where and when life is threatened, of course! This is astoundingly simple reasoning. And because of this simplicity much of James has been intentionally ignored or viciously underestimated by those who claim that since modern life is so "complex," modern philosophy must also be so. But yet again, the will to live and the ability to reason, these simple, common human qualities, when intensified to their utmost by the educative and cultural refinements of such men as James, did come to be powerful instruments of use, providing for him and for some others a maximum of creative possibility.

It is interesting to note that James regarded pessimism as a "religious disease." He pointed to the kind of disillusion that the religious (or idealistic) mind might feel upon discovering that visible nature could be perceived as "all plasticity and indifference." James had a deep understanding of this "religious" state of being. Clearly, he realized that it was possible to feel, "There is contradiction between the phenomena of nature and the craving of the heart to believe that behind nature there is a spirit whose expression nature is."[2] However, it seemed not impossible to him that, with care and courage, such a craving might be "cured." Or, to put it on a more practical level, he felt that such a craving might be directed into other channels of mental activity. In an indifferent universe, the *human element* could still be developed, the human decencies affirmed. With such self-directed activity might come a relief from the religious obsession, a relief that could indeed strengthen the moral values—without the pressures of religious fear.

III

I have spent so much time on the psychology of James's personal philosophy because I think it has a major bearing on certain states of

[2]The essay, *Is Life Worth Living?* by William James.

mind existing in contemporary intellectual circles. We are living at a time when supposedly "the defiance of the world" has become a prevalent attitude, not only in a physical sense (as it was always) but in a more general philosophical one. However, in this case, the meaning of the word "defiance" depends more upon the actions of its users than on its dictionary datum. For instance, certain "defiances" show themselves in a number of ways, but the unfortunate thing is that they may be revealed ultimately not as defiances, but as complacencies. Although people who practice these so-called methods of salvation may refer to themselves as rebels and individualists, the effect of their salvation is one of submission or of reduction to the mass cipher. Their defiance *talks* but it does not *work*. We get such types of modern moral thinking in poets who have turned to religion, in social thinkers who have put all of their eggs in one economic basket, in energetic university presidents who, in a burst of intellectual speed, have sprinted correctly backwards into a classical world. When I say their defiance talks, I mean it complains, it criticizes, it mourns—but it cannot work because it has turned its back upon the labor-demanding varieties and verities of the world and seeks to live comfortably in some illusory and fixed ideal.

One of the most amusingly complicated schools of modern morals is that of the Existentialists which (like the portraits of social personages by Dali and the wearing of thonged sandals by fashion models) has achieved popularity in the last two years. The more sensational properties of Existentialism have crashed the pages of newspapers and slick magazines, while its more definitive qualities have gotten into a number of book reviews, conversations on art, and lectures on the destiny of man. If one is interested enough to investigate the language of Existentialism one might read an article written by Wylie Sypher: "Hamlet: The Existential Madness" in *The New Republic* (June 22, 1946). In Sypher's particular interpretation (and it's the usual one) the relativity and "ambivalence" of humankind are looked upon sadly, even regretfully. Taking the character of Hamlet as one who expresses "existential malaise," Sypher then proceeds to paint up Shakespeare's protagonist as a most unattractive and quarrelsome fellow whose weighty necessities make it impossible for him to make up his mind. "Hamlet is a nihilist," says Sypher. Hamlet "commits himself to utter egoism." Now, it is very unlikely that the Danish prince is, and does, anything of the sort. In fact,

one might urge that the Prince of Denmark was the very opposite of a nihilist; perhaps one could see in him the deep-souled hero that Shakespeare intended (colorfully Elizabethan, in love with rhetoric), who was certainly not devoid of values but rather manifested a furious drive toward justice and right when his values were *affronted* by forces which he, Hamlet, believed to be criminal and wrong. As for his "egoism," that is so obviously outflanked by his strong attachment to his mother and murdered father that the point is not arguable—unless, of course, one wants dialectically to nag the word "egoism" into its opposite meaning, which seems to be the luxurious pastime of the *existenz* meditators.

Obviously then, Wylie Sypher's interpretation of Hamlet is a matter of taste and preference. And that preference is significant to us because it indicates a certain mood. The mood is this: "Isn't it too bad that life is so difficult?" Here, it is actually *regretted* that Hamlet must think of things relatively or (as the theme goes) that modern man must come to his decisions in a world without hierarchies. This kind of sentimental thinking is reflected in much "sophisticated" modern speculation. The Existentialists—stemming from Kierkegaard, Jaspers, and Heidegger, blossoming anew in Camus and Sartre (French flora from the same roots)—no matter how they may differ on small points, hold one thing in common: the belief that since the world is a difficult place to live in, it is therefore a wrong place. Not that they define their faith in exactly these words. But, if we look at their position semantically, the conglomerate sum of their words and feelings about existence adds up to a moral repudiation of existence. Their conclusions nearly always fall into the same mode of thinking. To illustrate what I mean: as expressed by Sypher's existentialism of Hamlet, "the sense of play" (which was, in Elizabethan use, a charming reference to fantasy and imagination) is defined by Existentialism as *unreality,* and not as, say, intellectual mastery or objective participation or some other attribute. It is simply that the Existentialists want to describe the vision and perception of man (with all the sensationalism of the advertising age in which they live) as *Nausea!* Ugh! The world makes them sick. It gives them nausea instead of delight, revelation, or simply intensification of insight. That is what perception does for them. As must be emphasized, what is described here is not merely romantic decadence such as prevailed after the first effects of nineteenth-century scientific realism had been felt. The existen-

tialist mood is not the adventurous happy-go-lucky (or even *un*-happy-go-lucky) freedom of the relativists of the early 1920's among us. The very words which Jean-Paul Sartre uses to speak of the "new" freedom are a dead giveaway of his attitude toward that freedom. "Man," he says, "is condemned to be free." As if freedom were a punishment and a doom! Perhaps, psychologically, it may feel that way to some personalities. But to some others, it may be regarded as a privilege or just a natural pleasure —like eating or walking. So far, the Existentialists have not taken account of this condition.

Existentialism, and its pedantic cousins living in other spheres of religious and literary thought, as it is preached now, appears to be a philosophy of impotence which, while recognizing the freedom of impulse, transposes all impulse into its negation and feels virtuous in the process. Above all, it is the feeling of superior *virtue* which so lamentably differs from the *doleureux* of the 1920's. If Kierkegaard's followers and the lovers of nausea must castrate themselves, must they also ask that the public praise them for their "impiety"? Apparently, they cannot help asking, even demanding the praise. This might be called having one's own moral cake and eating everybody else's too.

Sartre says, "Intuitive knowledge of man's position (in the universe) is what we call despair." And elsewhere, "Despair is identical with the will." Now, honestly speaking, why should *intuition* and *will* be painted the blue-gray color of despair? In another mood, could they not as easily be identified with a splashy ice-cream pink of optimism? One way is as extreme as the others. And both ways, the optimistic and despairing, are pretty shortsighted, so far as the variated ways of the world go.

IV

But it is the despairing way that is having a vogue now. There are expressions of this kind of intellectual caste system everywhere. One reads in novels and articles of the unhappy (or nauseated, *vide* Camus) perceiver who, because he sees the difficulty of things, therefore perceives the *truth*. Well and good; in experience itself, this is often the felt reality. But, in the line of this *après la guerre* thinking, it is indicated that to follow truth is to follow the impossible. It takes from Kierkegaard his identification of the impossibility of being human and also being "good." It takes from the romantics its identification of the impossibility of liv-

ing life and also *understanding* life. Existentialists transpose these identifications into the avenues of impossibility of acting (making choices) and yet retaining the precious passiveness of individual integrity. Kafka reduces to one the impossibility of achieving God (or spiritual perspective) and of attaining justice in a God-*less* world where justice must necessarily be a home-made, not a heaven-made product. Add to these the current back-to-Buddha sects like the California crowd: the disillusioned poets and philosophers who have seen the "impossibility of participating" in the corrupt and materialistic world and yet maintaining the habits of the spiritual world. Differing with Kierkegaard's peculiar "individualism," their fanatical wish is to crush all expression of personal desire. But strangely enough, the effect on the mind and manners of those who hold to such "ideals" is one and the same:—a withdrawal of powers, a paralysis of the will, without benefit of alcohol.

For the conception of "impossibility"—which may have been once an unwillingness to compromise, a creative defiance which could start the Kafkas, the Kierkegaards, the other disillusioned ones in a new direction —has now become explicitly *submission*. It but shows their various philosophies as a complete indifference to the things they once opposed, things like injustice, materialism, and mob stupidity. In other words, today's moderns have ceased to *move against* the elements which once *moved them* so profoundly. They have not accepted the challenge.

It is important here to point up the trends of today's intellectual mood simply because that mood does get imitated by people who have not "thought things out," who yet want to take some kind of philosophic stand in these unsettled times. Therefore, you may meet the disposition of a Kafka, a Bergson, a Valéry, a Kierkegaard almost anywhere. In universities, in cafes, in Utopian communities, in country clubs, you get surprising replicas of the same trends and attitudes. For wherever there is a spark of intellectuality, it is an illumination from some novel, essay, or lecture. And today, in these echoes of other minds, like the reflections from a dead moon, men see their destiny in a shadowy twilit air. And that ruminative air is, unfortunately, further darkened and congested by the fears and the sad complacencies of the "philosophers" who engendered the thoughts.

V

Why does this habit of frustration stand out in the make-up of our intellectuals? Whence comes this worship of the limitation, this love for the impossibility? I believe this question may be answered in the words of William James: these particular folk have set up in their thoughts a "block of determinism" which, it seems, has most seriously hindered their doing anything about contemporary problems. Centered in a tangible prison of *necessity,* they cannot see beyond its walls, which they themselves have made, into the intangible breathing space of *possibility*. For them, possibility is confined to their own four walls. The practice of subjugating the self to certain authority (and therefore certain limitations) is almost as usual in modern man as in primitive men. And, to some of our most sophisticated thinkers, this *certainty* and *authority* are predicated on the habit of believing that man is irrevocably "guilty," "weak," "the victim of economic environment," "suffering from an old neurosis," and so on. That man be postulated as irrevocably "innocent," "strong," or "the complete master of his environment" may appear as foolish—and indeed both points of view are probably of equal unreality and unrelatedness to experience. "Our fields of experience," says James, "have no more definite boundaries than our fields of view. Both are fringed with a *more* that continuously develops and that continuously supersedes them as life succeeds."

What James meant by the idea of "more" runs like a refreshing stream through the dry substance of philosophic data. But he knew very well the desert areas of deterministic thinking. In his essay, "The Dilemma of Determinism," he describes with terrible and subtle discernment the machinations of mind under the tyranny of a desire for absolute unity. It is a mind obsessed with feelings of regret, remorse, and grief. It is a mind which, when it encounters a small evil, a wrong opposed to its own ethical system, must understand that small evil as a vicious symptom of a vicious whole. The regret for that larger evil may, in the determinist scheme, be abandoned; but if we abandon these judgments, we are brought into a logical predicament. Determinism leads us to call our judgments of regret wrong (wrong enough to be abandoned) because they are pessimistic "in implying that what is impossible yet ought to be." But how about these judgments of regret? asks James. "If they are wrong, other judgments of approval presumably, ought to be in their

place. But, if they are necessitated" (as they are, in the determinist mind) "nothing else can be in their place; and the universe is just what it was before—namely a place in which *what ought to be appears impossible.*"

James suggests that the determinist refuge from such a quandary lies in the conception that not the *doing* of good or of evil is what nature cares for, but the *knowing* of them. That is, one may regard life as one continuous eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. According to this, says James, the world is neither pessimistic nor optimistic, but is gnostic. This gnosticism is transposed, by James, into subjectivism; that is, he interprets it as a kind of subjective conception with which one begins to believe that the universe is merely subsidiary to what one thinks or feels about it.

In being determinists, therefore (as James shows us) we are logically led to being either pessimists or subjectivists. The undesirability of the pessimistic position he has made clear. The flaw in the subjective position he shows in this way: the subjectivist reduces all the outward distinctions to a common denominator. The good, the bad, the misfortunes, become conceptually outward facts upon which the moral judgment may play. Although, says James, subjectivism seems the more rational scheme (that is, more rational than the pessimistic one) it fosters at last a fatalistic mood of mind. Its optimism turns into ethical indifference.

The only escape here, James continues, is a practical one. One may assume an attitude toward conduct. One may say that conduct, not sensibility, is the ultimate fact for recognition. No matter how we may feel, if we are only faithful in the outward act and refuse to *do* wrong, the world will, in so far, be safe—and we are quit of our debt toward it. And thus, we may pass from the subjective into the objective state of mind.

But, questions James, how can we talk about conduct, or care about right conduct unless we are enabled to feel that wrong conduct is also a possible and a *natural* way too? In other words, how can our actions have any meaning to us if they are not *re*-actions against a worthy foe?

Regret, moral conclusions, conduct, how can we humanly understand them in a plenum of determinism—without the admission of real, genuine possibilities in the world. The great point, according to James, is that the possibilities are really here. And it is at this point in his thinking that James emerges from the description of the determinist universe to

show us that there is yet another kind of universe, another realm from which the "stifled soul" might draw a free breath. It *is* the realm of possibility, "a world with a chance in it." Whether it be we who decide the possibilities—whether it be we who solve them, or an over-all (God conception) power working through us, is of small account, says James, so long as we admit that the issue is decided here and now. The reality, the excitements, the sheer mood which is existence, are what the determinists deny and suppress. If all things are considered foredoomed, "why then we can no longer believe in liberty." Although the determinists wish to define their determinism as the "higher freedom," it is just here that they make their most serious psychological error. Throughout James's works we get one continuous implication regarding the nature of freedom. It is, he asserts, our defining liberty as our *own* which makes it ours. Not as a higher freedom, or a lower one, or a middle of the road one. In the fullest anarchic sense it is ours. This is the powerful and chaotic fount from which may flow all the practical forms of freedom. To believe in liberty in the James way is the natural way in which humans "believe" in life. It goes without saying. It is that which struggles and strives of itself and is complete in the effort. And that struggle can be truly enacted by the will alone, the free will.

VI

It is the free will which annoys the modern mind most. Geared through the study of history *to* history, the mental machine submitting to one ideal or another, we are loath to give up our one-track minds. It is difficult to admit variety in values. Not that any genuine difficulty inheres in James's ideas or in the relativity they imply. It is simply that we are confused. And because of our confusion we lack the courage to look upon the multidudinous vast of a truly Genesis world and call it good. For the sentimental ones it has been sad. For the fearful ones, no other adjective applies but bad. To be sure, it appears to be a troublesome way to live, the way of the will. Admitting that it can be lived is to admit that we must be responsible for living it. The Existentialists are nauseated by that responsibility. For many others, it may be a bitter pill to take.

It may be bitter because it seems that despite all of our day's technological advances which lead us so certainly into ethical as well as physical relativities, some of us are afraid of realizing that relativity. We are afraid of the world whose every new discovery and definition pro-

nounces for us the undeniable character of equality. We are disturbed and made anxious by our own theories of atomism, of cultural relativity, of personal freedom. It is an urban anxiety we feel, comparable to the much-talked-of Middletown fear of being "different." Now we are not only afraid of being different from others but from what we used to think was ourselves.

It is a queer phenomenon: each man wants to be like everybody else, and yet—"To be equal is too radical a similarity." We see that modern man wants to be "like" insofar as he may be superior or inferior, that is, insofar as he may live out the traditional truths of yesteryear. To be thus superior or inferior requires less thinking, less adjusting, less work. So, in order to escape that particular kind of labor which is natural to himself and his time, he runs away to the supernatural. Or he builds dark undergrounds of thought based on the "tragedy of existence."

If William James were alive today, I am sure that he would be one of the first to be sympathetic with all of these new varieties of religious experience. The generosity of his mind, his very constitutional urge to rub shoulders with other modes of being would put him into "different cycles of operation." And yet he would, by his philosophy, be not doomed to accept any one as final.

We get this in his writing. James never dwelt on any abstract plane of affirmation. He was always returning to live human problems (live enough to "tempt his will"). He was always going back to grapple with them, to wrench from the mute substance of existence the multifarious questions and answers which shaped themselves into his philosophy. With James we move often on a journey through the somber lands engaged in dark searchings which lay bare the same complex miseries as we ourselves may experience. And yet, James's reaction is never a complaining one. Unlike Kierkegaard, and many of today's thinkers, James was not concerned chiefly with the categorizing of grievances. If there were grieving animals, his concern was with their development, their alteration. For the creatures of sorrow and despair he invented tasks and trades. He gave them good names whose psychological lineages could be traced back to that respectable progenitor, *purpose*. And all this he could do because his initial impulse was free, unchained from any deterministic fatalism. Because his experience traveled on, philosopher James had

no need of the moral nagging regret which seeks to hold value in one place.

In some peculiar way, those who philosophize today profess to believe in freedom, but somehow evade believing in free will. So we admit that anything is possible, but feel that man is insufficient for turning the possible into the actual. This is particularly true in certain types of "pure" metaphysical thinking. Related to this mood of mind we find that there is also a school of naturalism which attributes all bad fortune to "natural causes" and believes therefore that such fortune must be beyond human control. Strange logic!

But in our time, the more we see of this mixed-up state of affairs, the more we may (with James) feel zest for a world made up of such complexities and deterrent objects, the more we may feel stimulated to the struggle, our moral actions achieving the ease and simplicity which is their natural right. That is, we may sincerely regard the perverse and the chaotic as natural, not merely for bemoaning their depressive eccentricities, but also for realizing their expressive novelties. By holding to an attitude of courage and curiosity we may, with certainty, fix our efforts to the strange or familiar contours of whatever kinds of ideas which may be presented to us—alternately making values as we do so. In a realistic world, this seems to be as happy and reasonable a philosophy as one can hope for.

When the French poet, Paul Valéry, writes an appreciation of Bergson and says, "The true value of philosophy is to lead thought back to itself," one wonders just what kind of mental-automotion this is intended to inspire. One can only see that with such careful driving, the mind's machine gets securely parked somewhere and is left to atrophy, unused. It is to be doubted that this is the value of anything. One would rather say that the true value of philosophy may be that which presents us with a mode of thinking which awakens somehow "the will to believe" and consequently the will to *be*.

Will and belief, these are the two foci of living and thinking which James has suggested to us. These are the fixed points from which we may move and turn freely in every direction, exercising the fullest of our human power for enjoyment and control in our day and perhaps in days to come.

LINES

By HOWARD GRIFFIN

Suggested by the photograph "Women Weep for the Children of Naples" in Robert Capa's Slightly Out of Focus

If I am to become finished with violence
which is always incomplete I must become
unfinished, half-made, splayed,
spaded by suffering for I must live
cut-off from lust, upheld in air,
upborne on wires intangent to the earth
like that wild sketch of Michelangelo
full of the girdered drawing, done
in an hour, the bitter lines of ink
graven in truth, made up
of architectural chest and pinioned hand
and feet that run (from hurry incomplete)
out of the picture racing toward
the barren land of war. Observe
the shattered hand, the tendoned limbs
truncated by the pen. So war itself
propels itself. He could have finished it
for power is here but then it would have been
perhaps less fair, more perfect now the ruined.
More perfect now the dead.

Out of the past the image of all truth
is the wild sketch through which we gaze

HOWARD GRIFFIN's short stories and verse have appeared in a number of little magazines. Last year his *Cry Cadence,* a book of poems, was published by Farrar, Straus.

as through the aperture of defeat half through
the ink-slashed skeleton of a man
into a mirror-land. This skull, this
wolverine grasp, this deep contractile
thigh, this dream of arrogant vein runs swift
to war. —But now the dead are framed,
they hide in sweating photographs of black
held up by women dressed in shrieking black
and posed against a wall: the camera eye
caught this carved woman who had lost a son.
The grief is near as dew upon her face
scalpeled of death: she holds
him up for all the world to see
as if contagion of the dual lens
could stir his limbs to breath and bring
the slow sad smile at last. As though
the congress of our eye looking at his
could be some comfort of an After-life
or more perhaps the trophy of a loss:
he looks out, smaller, held in thrall
of ancient studio as if in cage
of doom— but she, she stands right through
the war, slashing the written page to bits—
the ancient woman in the tribal black
to whom all ruin is a personal death
steps through the slender paper to my thought
and sears her asking eyes upon my day.
She is unfinished too: she sends to air
the life she dreamed from naught
as if the air itself infection held
and took these boys back to their home again.

HARVARD PHILOLOGY FORTY YEARS AGO

By JAMES H. HANFORD

When I went to Harvard for graduate work in English in the fall of 1906 the milk of my nurture west of the Hudson was still in me. I had studied Latin for five or six years, Greek for four or five, French enough to read it easily, German enough to speak it simply; introductory sciences seriatim; history, economics, politics, philosophy, literature the same. No art, no music appreciation, no sociology. The patterns of my culture included a great reverence for New England. Plato, Goethe, Matthew Arnold were my gods; but Longfellow and the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table were still a large part of my religion. I wanted to visit Bunker Hill and the House of Seven Gables and to stand by the rude bridge that arched the flood in Concord. I was somehow geared to see little connection between these interests and the professional study of language and literature and if the impressive program in American Civilization now offered at Harvard had then been available I would certainly have passed it by. Suggestion and prestige are everything in these matters and one follows the intimations of immortality as one receives them. But all my loyalties were ready to attach themselves to the world-famous institution in which I had enrolled myself. Harvard itself was the American pronaos. It was also the proud temple of the arts of man. My first official interview was with George Lyman Kittredge, him of the gaunt frame, white beard and clear complexion sitting in the blessed seats of philology, in Warren house, where James Russell Lowell's books lined the open shelves. It was under the aegis of this Olympian that my intellectual course was mainly set. My purpose in this essay is to present the conception of letters and learning to which beginners like

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myself were invited, the interests and issues among which we had to choose. The nature of these choices is clearer in a retrospective view.

I pass over the incidental gratifications of my individual craving to be received into the bosom of New England, and I leave to the reader's imagination, also, the impression made by various noncurricular manifestations of Harvard's greatness. I heard, for example, William James give six lectures on a pluralistic universe and had my monistic idealism shattered at a blow.

> I hold the finite God, for reasons which I will touch on later; but I hold that his rival and competitor—I feel almost tempted to say his enemy—the absolute, is not only not forced on us by logic, but that it is an improbable hypothesis.

George Herbert Palmer, a mild and fragile old man, read *Samson Agonistes* to the Graduate English Club with what I thought a beautiful emotion. George Santayana dissected Shelley in a style as silky as his dress and beard and accent. Barrett Wendell touched the Ultima Thule of pessimistic urbanity in telling a group of novices that his life effort as a teacher had been wasted. Nobody who ever studied with him had learned to write.

The effects of these incursions were more lasting and important than I then thought them. A professional obligation rested on me, and the regime which claimed my devotion was one to whose doctrine and discipline metaphysical speculation, impressionistic criticism, and mere inviting of the soul were alien. The processing of attitude and opinion went on incessantly, and never with greater effect than in informal comment and recommendation and in the obiter dicta of the classroom which from admired and witty teachers have so great an effect on the youthful mind. I soon became aware of some kind of Kulturkampf going on around me. But I had no understanding of the nature of the forces at play in it, and could hardly have had such understanding without a little knowledge of its background, a few facts at least, oriented to the time and place such as might have been given by an unbiased cultural historian, if such a historian could have been found. It was an important fact, for example, that C. W. Eliot, following Gilman at Johns Hopkins, had thrown his influence in favor of the German type of intellectual and scholarly activity against the long established English

tradition as it had become naturalized in this country. It was important also that this ideal did not hold the field alone.

The English department had been affected by the German procedures both at first and second hand. F. J. Child, the grand old man of balladry, had studied two years abroad and drunk deep of the romantic nationalism which flowed down from Herder to the brothers Grimm and from them to the Danish Grundvig whom Child directly imitated. Kittredge, his pupil and successor, had little direct contact with the Teutonic masters, but he followed the trails they had marked out. And in language and literature no influence compared with his in determining the code and canon. Staunch New Englander and unreconstructed American patriot that he was, his Teutonism was a deliberate, not a forced allegiance. It gave sinew to his Anglo-Saxon loyalties. As a matter of fact, neither he nor any other of the Harvard *Gelehrten* of those happy days seemed very conscious of issues of nationalism as being involved in their academic predilections. They accepted *philologische Wissenschaft,* with its insistence on the authority of fact, its tendency to see literary change in evolutionary terms, its demand for technicality and specialization, as the universal thing it was, when dissociated from theories of race or Hegelian vagaries about historic destiny.

But such factors *were* involved and subtly operative, even in the days when nationalism seemed nonmalignant. There is little recognition of this in Samuel Morison's *Three Centuries of Harvard.* He records the faculty degrees from Germany and the enthusiasm with which the idea of a university was adopted by Eliot and his more progressive colleagues. He speaks also of the suspicion of propaganda which was later attached to William II's gift of casts to the Germanic Museum. But he does not mention a famous clash which was said to have taken place between the French and German departments and which was still remembered in my time; nor does he point out as significant the consciously anti-German and pro-French, pro-English trend in the philosophical lectures of William James already alluded to.

The story is that Adolphe Cohn, an Alsatian who had fought with the French army at the siege of Paris, began a public lecture with the statement: "If I had been the good God I would not have created Beesmark," whereupon the members of the German department who were present filed out. I cannot vouch for the truth of this. It is a matter of

record only that Cohn did give one of the lectures in the university series which preceded and prepared for the founding of the graduate school, and that the next year Francke gave three on the Bismarck empire.

As for James, he speaks, of course, with serene impersonality as one who has mastered and assessed the whole movement of modern philosophy and out of full recognition of the contribution of nineteenth-century German thought. But his indication of an intellectual cleavage along lines of national tradition is very positive, and his intimation that ancient English empiricism "so long put out of fashion by nobler sounding Germanic formulas" may be getting ready for a new and stronger flight, carries implications which extend beyond the field of the metphysical.

> The torch of learning passes from land to land as the spirit bloweth the flame. The deepening of philosophic consciousness came to us English folk from Germany, as it will probably pass back ere long.

The following passage is of a tenor which was beginning to be familiar in literary and philological circles and among persons very innocent indeed of pragmatism.

> The over-technicality and consequent dreariness of the younger disciples at our universities is appalling. It comes from too much following of German models and manners. Let me fervently express the hope that in this country you will hark back to more humane English tradition. . . . In Germany the forms are so professionalized that anybody who has gained a teaching chair and written a book, however distorted and eccentric, has the legal right to figure forever in the history of the subject like a fly in amber. . . . Such are the rules of the professorial game—they think and write from each other and for each other and at each other exclusively.

It is inevitably in the modern language field that we may look for the most egregious evidences of action and reaction of this sort. French, German, and English departments were then and they still are full of all sorts of cultural electricity and their rifts and rivalries are reinforced, if not determined, by national as well as regional, class and institutional relationships. The battle is carried on with weapons by no means vulgar: with canons of taste, formulations of scholarly method, literary and personal enthusiasms, historical judgments, interpretations of reason and the will of God. Even the Americanists, who hardly existed then, have inherited the serpent of division, some choosing the ways of science, some aspiring to critical illumination, some Anglophile, some cosmopolitan, still others cultivating a kind of angry isolationism. All this comes out

clearly at the meetings of the national professional organizations where French, German and English teachers, or even English teachers alone, are assembled on the same platform and in the same committees. It is no accident that a member of the Harvard German department was secretary of the Modern Language Association for so many years.

Among the factors in the ideological situation at Harvard which made life interesting around 1906 were the ideas and personality of Irving Babbitt. Born in Dayton, Ohio, Babbitt had gone to Harvard on his own initiative and taken his junior year abroad. Further adventures of the spirit included a year of oriental studies at the Sorbonne, and one in Sanskrit with Lanman in the Harvard Graduate School. In 1893 he had taught French, Spanish, and Italian at Williams and in 1894 been appointed instructor in Romance Languages at Harvard. His course in French Literature of the Renaissance, which I attended, was given in the learned, systematic Harvard lecture style without propaganda, but his critical program was already formulated and his opinions were to be had for the asking. "We agreed," writes a colleague of his at Williams, "that the minute specialization of the German type was threatening to reduce pure erudition to mere pedantry, while encouraging sheer dilettantism in the field of taste. . . . Our remedy was to shift interest from Germany to France where the humanistic tradition of the Renaissance still survived."

Babbitt's own teacher and master had been Charles Eliot Norton, who still walked the streets of Cambridge in my time, the symbol of a tradition of humanistic culture which owed nothing to the reforms of Eliot. Third in the Dante succession from Longfellow and Lowell, he had earlier exercised great influence. It is not strange that Babbitt of Dayton, Madisonville, Wyoming, and points between, having imbibed sweetness and light from such a source and been compelled to play the professional game in a manner which violated his sensibilities, should have become increasingly a zealot. Presumably the brilliant Middle Western boy had been received with something better than Chesterfieldian urbanity. Norton was open to conviction about the cultural promise of the hinterland. "I have never," he writes in one of his letters, "seen Americans from whom one could draw happier auguries for the future of America than some of the men whom I saw in Chicago." Not all New Englanders spoke in just these accents.

The ideas of other aggressive Harvard Westerners who made common cause against the Philistines at this time were known in philological circles, at least by reputation. Paul Elmer More took his A.M. in Sanskrit along with Babbitt in 1893 and was now editor of the *Nation*. A little later he was to ensconce himself in Princeton with the Shelburne essays. Stuart Sherman's name was memorable among English Ph.D.'s as the author of a dissertation on the dramatist John Ford, which was well written besides being erudite. It was mentioned with approval in my presence by Bliss Perry. Both Perry and Dean Briggs were in the counsels of graduate English and both were or pretended to be appalled by the things they were compelled to witness. "Chester Greenough's thesis weighed nine pounds!" Briggs used to say with eyes of wonderment. After contributing brilliantly to the *Nation* under More (we all read his attack on Graduate English in 1908 and his later portrait of Kittredge on the publication of his *Festschrift*), Sherman fell back into the democratic flux on a Middle Western campus and ended up by confessing that he had erred in trying to make men good instead of happy. Eliot, on the other hand, sailed by the compass eastward and upward and travelled far. He counted the lectures of Babbitt and Santayana among his memorable experiences, but was himself of the poet breed. He went so far as to write an acceptable dissertation in philosophy, but did not take the Ph.D. degree. Our physical paths must sometimes have crossed, but I never happened to hear his name when I was a graduate, he an undergraduate student.

These needlings of the standard English program coming from many different directions and being of such diverse character, provoked a variety of response from the dominant professoriate. Kittredge, for example, would scintillate on the theme of pedantry ("A pedant is a person who uses the wrong words in the wrong places") or the preoccupation of scholarship with dead facts ("To a corpse *all* facts are dead"). He was death on critical pretension without knowledge and on the idea that the scientific study of literature ever killed appreciation. On one occasion, when William Allan Neilson read a brilliant and humane paper on Shakespeare's characters, finding odd but convincing parallels between such personalities as Falstaff and Cleopatra, Kittredge improved the opportunity by asking whether the arduous work which he had just completed on the text had interfered with his enjoyment of the plays. Neilson himself was master of a more deft technique. He was quite capable of

giving the "damned literary fellow" a quietus with his own bodkin. I remember hearing him describe Matthew Arnold as the son of Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby, "the excellence of whose influence on his students was limited only by the fact that they tended to become prigs." This was attacking the enemy's main line of communication, and Neilson alone of the philologists had the requisite combination of humanity, erudition, and cultural finesse to make him a match for the higher critics. His backgrounds were, of course, English and Scottish, though he had married a German wife. He was fully loyal to the ideals of scientific scholarship but recognized its excesses and perversities and wished to mitigate the inhumanity of the regime. His genuine love and admiration for Kittredge made it possible for him to deal with him tactfully and even, on occasions, to induce him to change his mind. He would talk confidentially to students on this subject: "You can't do anything with the Old Man by a frontal attack." Neilson's *bete noir* was a Canadian disciple of Gaston Paris, a spinner of dubious arguments and magnifier of small discoveries, but an enthusiastic and persuasive teacher. I was privately advised that it was not necessary to take "Old Norse," in spite of a well circulated rumor to the effect that the subject was indispensable. I enrolled in a rival seminar by way of substitute and was well rewarded. Though these two men were professional rivals they were equally defenders of the faith. Sniping, in general, was a minor and unimportant activity as compared with sincere efforts which were being made to glorify the cause of learning. The labors of those who had worked out the doctrine of the final "e" in Chaucer were pointed to as a model of patience and devotion. An illustration sometimes used was that of the building of a railroad. The work of the individual laborer, throwing dirt on an embankment, was in itself trifling but indispensable in relation to the whole.

It remains to consider the specific studies which made up the normal and approved curriculum. My own course included, as nearly as I can recollect, the following: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Old French, Beowulf, Dante, Chaucer, Scottish Poets from Barbour to Lindsay, the English Metrical Romances, English Drama to 1642, Shakespeare, the late Eighteenth Century, Pastoral Poetry, Literary Criticism, Allegory, Advanced Composition. The core of this program was the Anglo-Saxon-Old-French-Chaucer triad. It would have been quite acceptable if I had concentrated

even more heavily in the medieval field. This might have meant the addition of Old Norse, a third, more advanced course in Anglo-Saxon, a second term in the Romances, Teutonic Mythology, Celtic, Mediaeval Latin, and other specialties in or out of the English department. The fact that all the language and literature degrees were taken in the Division of Philology facilitated such excursions. The objective was the equipment of a man of real erudition, about whose professional and scientific status there should be no doubt and who could hold up his head in pride among his fellows in the older and more reputable field of classics. A dissertation in some unedited mediaeval writer, necessarily obscure, or some technical aspect of the life or work of a major figure, or some story motive or literary form which might run through many languages and periods, was the natural fruit of such preparation. Chaucer was the *point de repaire* of many studies, and the idea that this author was becoming for the first time understood as a result of the combined effort of many workers helped give meaning to the entire program. It was a red-letter day when Karl Young in a course thesis demonstrated that the plot of *Troilus and Cresseide,* well known to have been based on Boccaccio's *Filostrato,* deserted this poem at one point to follow the parallel story of the *Filocolo.*

Philology, in the limited sense of linguistics, was ancillary to historical interpretation, though pursued also in some of the courses as an end in itself. Students were expected to talk in a scholarly way in the classroom and on a final examination about Grimm's or Verner's laws, the differentiating characteristics of Anglo-Saxon among the Teutonic languages, the changes in English phonology, inflection, and syntax from Anglo-Saxon times to the sixteenth century, the influence of Danish, French and Latin on the English language in its various periods. But these phases of language development were closely associated with the entire cultural history of which they are a part. The philologist is the person who makes his approach to the past through the phenomenon of language. "In the beginning was the word."

It was hardly possible to specialize in pure linguistics, the study of living speech being at that time relatively undeveloped at Harvard. It was the wise (and rare) student who elected to work with Grandgent in elementary phonetics before going far with the historical dialects. Semantics in the modern sense was quite unheard of. On the other hand, a great deal of attention was devoted to the description of the language

of older authors, Chaucer again being the main object of attack. I have spoken of Kittredge's own laborious examination of the final "e" in *Troilus and Cresseide,* itself a pious continuation of F. J. Child's similar study of the *Canterbury Tales.* The establishment of texts and the linguistic analyses were, of course, correlative processes. Such studies might eventuate in critical editions, from which there could ultimately be made a complete account of the dialects of English.

Source and background study, so much decried by critics of the philological regime, was conceived of both as a means of interpretation and as an independent contribution to cultural history. Students might stop with the mere facts of the case and be applauded, but the applications had to be made by some one. Thus detailed working out of Shakespeare's use of his material in Hamlet not only made possible a true reading of the play as he himself and his Elizabethan contemporaries understood it, but threw light on the workings of the artistic imagination and helped complete the record of literary practice in the Elizabethan period. This procedure was a logical extension of the philological approach to literature. So also was the investigation of the physical stage, the Elizabethan audience, the background of customs, ideas, beliefs, and conventions. "It is the purpose of this course," Kittredge used to remark, "to find out what Shakespeare said and what he meant when he said it." This might mean a half hour's worrying over an alternative reading of the folio and the first quarto, or a disquisition on the Renaissance conception of Caesar as a great man swollen with pride and marked for downfall by the Gods. It required both knowledge and imagination to make the results of some of the more minute and recondite studies seem anything but trivial and otiose. In some cases it required pure faith.

The philological ideal is not, however, to be judged by the work of apprentices, but by that of the master craftsmen. The exhibits range all the way from articles in technical journals to works of considerable breadth and magnitude. They include also the courses themselves, both advanced and elementary, and such popularizing lectures as those given in the Lowell Institute or at provincial universities. It would be hard to convince the layman of the possibility of humane interest of some of the subjects in any hands, and there is no point in my laboring to do so. Let me, however, by way of illustration, describe, first, the activities of one

of the advanced seminars, then those of a reading course in which the fruits of research were gathered and enjoyed.

Kittredge's "English Metrical Romances" was open only to students who had already gone some distance in mediaeval studies. It was elected only by those who were pretty well inoculated with the idea that the best training in scholarly method and the best foundation even for modern and belle-lettristic interests were to be obtained by working in the older fields, where the materials were limited and where the nonclassical sources of European cultural tradition were first tangibly available for study. The course ran throughout the year. There was no textbook and, in the first term, no assignment. Students were expected to understand what was being talked about and to that end they were cordially invited to scramble about the library between lectures. First came an all but interminable history of the extant romances in English, with bibliographical comment and a kind of Cook's tour of their points of special interest. We well understood that much of this material would not be found in any book. If one had read the work under discussion, as he usually had not, he might listen with continuous interest. In any case, he could wait for the frequent sallies of wit and personality, taking down the rest of what was said for future use. This took about five weeks. Then Kittredge launched into a mighty demonstration of original research which finished out the term. For some years he used *Gawain and the Green Knight* as a subject, analyzing the story into its various motives and tracing these back through combinations earlier than the English poem ultimately to their occurrence as independent units. The trail led into the fastness of primitive Irish folklore and Kittredge's irrefragable proof that the germ of the story, the Strong Man's Bargain, was passed to French from Gaelic hands, gave added substance to the Celtic hypothesis of romance origins. The paralleling of the crude and the sublimated materials was a lesson in the arts of civilization. It was not necessary to discourse on the literary qualities of the English poem or the *fin-de-siècle* culture which it reflects. The problems of authorship and language were for the time being disregarded. It was understood that Kittredge was embarked on a piece of specialized research, interesting in itself, and having a bearing on issues of large importance. One was likely to have read or to read at this time his earlier, published study of the Lay of *Sir Orfeo,* in which the same procedure is less austerely followed with even clearer and more alluring

results: a lifting of veil on veil, from honest English, to courtly French, to naive and imaginative Celt, transforming the classical court of Pluto to the substance of his own *fairie*. These two examples of learning and logical acuteness at the service of the "scholarship of ideas," with the spell of voice and beard, sufficed to confirm the student in his philological faith against a wilderness of Babbitts.

The second term of the course was given to the reading and discussion of student papers, once a week in Kittredge's study at his home. It was here that the minor consummations of scholarship were made. An approved report meant the beginnings of a doctoral dissertation if one would. Hence rose Joseph Beach's thesis on the "Loathly Lady," strange preliminary to the career of a distinguished critic of modern letters; hence rose also the studies in romance origins of T. P. Cross, penetrating even more deeply into the Celtic gloom. It was possible without disgrace to be an auditor if one's lines were already cast elsewhere. One Kittredge seminar, pursued to the bitter end, had been enough for me. I had chosen the less weighty advanced Chaucer for the preliminary exhibition of my talents in research and had written a study of the "Influence of Ovid on Chaucer," which cost much labor and excited only moderate approbation but taught me something about the kinship and the difference of two great literary artists.

It was possible to reach thesis temperature in more modern fields, but the Kittredge seminars outclassed all others as propaedeutics for the doctorate. And by the same token, it was his applications of learning to literary interpretation on lower levels which were most spectacularly effective. English 2, the famous Shakespeare course, though designed for undergraduates and elected by them in vast numbers, exhibited his technique as certainly as did the one on Beowulf, which, being carried on with the aid of German textbooks and requiring a term of preliminary plugging at Anglo-Saxon, was caviar to the general. This latter course well illustrated what philological method could do toward the enhancement of an archaic and difficult masterpiece. The purpose here was only to transmit knowledge, not directly to prepare for its advancement, but to transmit it in such a way as to exhibit the processes of sifting, correcting and applying the accumulations of lifetimes of research. The subject was one that called out all Kittredge's powers. It was a matter of line-by-line interpretation, with long excursions at certain points and the reitera-

tion of a few leading ideas in support or demolition of this or that hypothesis of this or that scholar, as the evidence came along in the text. One outstanding conviction was that the poem is an artistic unity and no mere product of the butt-ending of independent lays. Recurrent indications of the same hand at work, as, for example, similar uses of the figure of irony in all parts of the story, were never missed. Another main objective was to demonstrate the insecurity of elaborate mythological interpretations. To this end every tangible allusion both to myth and to history was carefully examined. Finally, way was made for recognition of the human and dramatic values by acceptance of the author's peculiar narrative technique as something to be understood and judged according to its own canons. The net result was the salvaging of a great and noble manifestation of human culture and the extension of the range of literary understanding and imagination.

Some students were wholly unresponsive to all this, but surely it was their own limitations or some strong conditioning which made them so. There were those, on the other hand, even in the group which counted itself plain-minded—burel men of other gifts than the ones needed for the higher learning—who came away with admiration and enlightenment. John Lomax belonged in this category. He had come from Texas with a bag full of cowboy ballads, which endeared him in spite of all possible academic shortcomings. He went forth assured of the value of his own effort and of the relevance of these materials to a history of folk expression which spanned the centuries. The sophisticated and the primitive met in Harvard English. Beowulf and its great expositor were both at once.

If I say little about other outstanding personalities in the English department it is partly because they have never been in controversy, partly because their work was not allowed to come to fruition in student research. This does not mean that they were not without influence but only that they were not in a position to bind and loose. Bliss Perry, for example, was beginning to have eager followers among the ablest graduates. His lectures were model performances and no one could escape the contagion of his charm. But only in his later years did he teach courses with sifted personnel. George Pierce Baker was an innovator in the application to older drama of technical knowledge of the stage. His interests, however, were divided between scholarship and playwriting, and the

great developments in this field fell into non-Harvardian hands for guidance.

William Allan Neilson, who not only played the part of a right-hand man, wise and temperate in his sense of scholarly values, but was able to follow his bent in the analysis of literary form and critical ideas, became a college president before he could succeed Kittredge as the determining power in the intellectual activities of the department. His loss was a sad one for graduate English, more so, really, than that of Baker, for there was no one else so capable as he would have been of maintaining philological morale, while accommodating the Puritan austerities of the regime, the transcendental fanaticisms in this their latest incarnation, to the actual cultural situation in broad America. What has actually happened in the country is not that the traditional system has collapsed like the deacon's one hoss shay, but that it has perforce suffered competing programs to gain recognition. As a result the Babbitts and the anti-Babbitts, the Americanists and the Anglicists, the critics and the philologians are challenged by the problem of mutual toleration. They may yet learn to pull together in a program of humane learning having a high appeal to the loyalties of able men. Contrary, perhaps, to common belief the leadership in such a program is as likely as ever to come out of Harvard.

THE LIBERALISM *of* MACHIAVELLI

By EDWARD McN. BURNS

IN THESE DAYS of confusion and terror, few subjects are more important than the meaning and future of political liberalism. Upon the conclusions we come to, depend our attitudes toward a large proportion of the crucial issues of our times: the rights of individuals, the protection of minorities, the problem of economic security, the growth of militarism, the fate of internationalism—in short, nearly every question concerning the efforts of men to live in freedom and dignity and to assist the progress of civilization in its age-old race with disaster.

Despite varied and conflicting definitions, liberalism has a fundamental meaning which leaves little room for challenge. Few would deny, for example, that it is the opposite of conservatism, on the one hand, and of radicalism, on the other. The liberal cannot be an opponent of change, except in relation to certain values essential to freedom or to social progress. Even these he must be willing to reinterpret from time to time in the light of new conditions. Likewise, liberalism is basically opposed to the methods of the radical. Its followers show little enthusiasm for mounting the barricades or for any other drastic action to change the existing order overnight. The liberal refuses to subscribe to the dictum that the end justifies the means. He believes, rather, that the two are interdependent, that the choice of means may condition the end, even to the extent of perverting or destroying it. He distrusts any theory which proposes to reduce the individual to a mere instrument of social progress, no matter how exalted the purpose proclaimed. He agrees with Kant that man is a creature of such noble worth that he should never be treated as a means exclusively.

Perhaps, above all, liberalism should be defined in terms of freedom. Both historically and etymologically that has been the substance of its meaning. It seems utterly inconceivable that liberals at any time or under

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any conditions could refer to liberty as a "treacherous phantom," as John Ruskin described it, or as the "putrid corpse" of Mussolini's bellicose language. Alike as an ideal and a practical program, liberalism has been inseparable from freedom from despotism, from arbitrary arrest and punishment, from fear and privation, from tyranny and enslavement whether of the body, the conscience, or the mind. It is the antithesis of concentration camps, of secret police, of people's courts, of the bullet in the back of the neck, of censorship, of the blood purge, and of the monolithic state. It comprehends nearly everything included in the modern ideal of democracy; yet it is not the same, for democracy is more directly concerned with the supremacy of the popular will.

Among the major prophets of liberalism the names of such men as Harrington, Locke, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Jefferson, Bentham, and J. S. Mill have generally been given prime recognition. Recently, however, attempts have been made to present Machiavelli as one of the true exponents of the liberal ideal. Apologists for the Florentine include Count Sforza, Guglielmo Ferrero, Max Lerner, and especially James Burnham. Professor Burnham in his *Machiavellians* acclaims the author of the *Prince* as a "defender of freedom." He considers him a true liberal because of his republicanism, his devotion to the national welfare, his belief in the supremacy of the law, and his denunciation of tyranny. Such doctrines undoubtedly bear the hallmark of historic liberalism, but whether they are sufficient to justify the classification of a philosopher as a true liberal is another question. Hitler and Mussolini also professed devotion to the national welfare, while Stalin acknowledges the authority of a constitution and vigorously denounces some forms of tyranny. It seems evident that other and more conclusive tests are also required.

II

What basis really exists for the belief that Machiavelli was a liberal and therefore a suitable guide for the progressive politician of the contemporary world? Many of the opinions recently given impress the writer of this article as of doubtful validity. They appear to be founded almost exclusively upon certain assertions of the Florentine sage contained in his *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*. To be sure, this was a major work, but portions of it are susceptible to varying interpretations, and it seems obvious that none of it should be regarded as definitive except in the light of what the author affirms elsewhere. In short, no

authoritative conclusion can be drawn with respect to Machiavelli's liberalism except on the basis of a careful study of all of his writings.

On the score of political liberalism it may be granted at the outset that Machiavelli definitely preferred a republican form of government to a monarchy or a perpetual dictatorship. It would have been strange indeed if he had done otherwise, for his native city of Florence, in whose service he spent the best years of his life, had been a republic since time without memory. Moreover, the state whose political system he most admired was ancient Rome from the fall of the Tarquins to the accession of Julius Caesar. Whatever his motives, he considered republics the nearest approximation to the ideal form. He argued that they last longer, that they pay more attention to the common welfare, that they are more flexible in the face of changing conditions, and that they are better adapted to bringing their talented citizens to the fore.

Elements of social and economic liberalism can also be discovered in Machiavelli's teachings. Governments should rule, he maintained, for the economic welfare of their subjects. In the *Prince* he bestowed high praise upon the cities of Germany, which "have always enough means" to give the lower classes work "for one year in these employments which form the nerve and life of the town." He avowed that "it is not individual prosperity, but the general good, that makes cities great," and he affirmed that "the general good is regarded nowhere but in republics. . . ." More important, he detested rule by an aristocracy, either of birth or of wealth. He declared that the ambition of nobles is so great that, if not effectively curbed, it will quickly bring catastrophe to any state. He was just as emphatic in condemning the idle rich, the so-called "gentlemen," who live on the proceeds of their estates, "without devoting themselves to agriculture or any other useful pursuit." Such men, he averred, "are pernicious to any country or republic." If a republic desires to preserve its existence uncorrupted, it should not permit any of its citizens to "live in the manner of gentlemen" but should "maintain amongst them a perfect equality." In addition, the door of opportunity should be constantly open to virtue and merit. Poverty should never bar the way to the achievement of rank or honor. As long as this rule was adhered to by the ancient Romans, the preservation of the republic was assured. Indeed, Machiavelli considered the accumulation of fortunes by any class of citizens to be a detriment to the state. "Poverty produces better fruits than riches." The

products of the former are frugality, humility, obedience, and respect for superiors, while the fruits of riches are nothing but ruin.

But whatever form the government may take, it is essential that its powers be limited. Contrary to popular opinion, there is little in Machiavelli's works to stamp him as an advocate of despotism. He regarded despotism as practically synonymous with tyranny, and in most of his writings he castigated the tyrant as the worst of all rulers. For a political system to conform to Machiavelli's ideal, it was necessary that it be a government in which the laws were supreme. The laws would be made by a wise leader when the state was founded and would be binding ever after. A prince subject to no other control than his own will would be like a madman, and even a people that could do as it pleased would "hardly be wise." This idea of the sovereignty of law, of course, was not originated by Machiavelli. It had been a central principle of the Stoic philosophy from the time of Cicero, and from Stoicism it had found its way into medieval theory. Machiavelli's doctrine, however, owed nothing to such sources. Instead, it went back to Greek and Roman notions of a primal lawgiver who would establish the state and provide it with a definite code of laws as a permanent constitution. Machiavelli's reign of law would be the reign of an original positive law, not the natural law of the Stoics and medieval Christians.

Machiavelli may be credited with certain other doctrines which, in some measure, at least, may be justifiably classified as liberal. He did not recoil with horror at the first signs of rebellion or of civil strife. He wrote approvingly of revolt against tyrants, and he thought that struggles between parties, even though accompanied by violence, were the source of all the laws "favorable to liberty." It was his opinion that the demands of a free people were rarely destructive of their liberty, that they were usually "inspired by oppressions, experienced or apprehended," and that "every free state ought to afford the people the opportunity of giving vent to their ambition." Any disorder that might result would be counterbalanced by the increase in public virtue.

Finally, it is to the credit of Machiavelli that he opposed a ruthless and unrestricted imperialism. Though he considered it perfectly legitimate that states should conquer territory for their own advantage, he maintained that the extent of territory thus acquired should be limited, and that the inhabitants should not be enslaved. To continue annexing

country after country until a vast empire was accumulated was to invite ruin. From his study of ancient history he drew the conclusion: "The increase of power and state brings with it an increase of enmity and envy, the invariable sources of war and disaster." He admired the imperialism of the early Romans under which conquered peoples were brought under the rule of Rome as "associates" rather than subjects. He considered the abandonment of this system a primary factor in the destruction of the liberties of the Roman people.

III

Despite the numerous enlightened and progressive ideas outlined above, it is difficult to conclude, from a study of all his writings, that Machiavelli was a genuine liberal. The reason for this is not, as is commonly supposed, that he wrote as a realist, describing simply what men do in the political sphere, and not what they ought to do. The realism of the Florentine philosopher is characteristic mainly of the *Prince*. In other works he often wrote of political matters in idealistic fashion—not, to be sure, in accordance with some standard of absolute perfection, but, as Aristotle did, in terms of the best standard attainable.

In truth, it was not Machiavelli's method which prevented him from developing a fully matured liberal philosophy. Rather, it was certain deep-rooted convictions about history and the nature of man which made liberal ideals in politics almost impossible. His conception of human nature, for instance, could scarcely be reconciled with ideas of the dignity and inalienable rights of the individual. Almost everyone knows that, in the *Prince,* he presented an extremely cynical view of men's propensities for evil. Men are by nature deceitful, vain, ungrateful, cowardly, and covetous. They will always be false to their ruler unless they are compelled to be true. But only slightly less disparaging are the descriptions of man's tendencies in the *Discourses* and in the *History of Florence*. In the latter it is said that "men are much more ready for evil than for good." In the *Discourses* the author declares that "whoever desires to found a state and give it laws, must start with assuming that all men are bad and ever ready to display their vicious nature, whenever they may find occasion for it." Although they may succeed temporarily in concealing their evil attributes, "time which has been said to be the father of all truth" will ultimately bring them forth. Thus it would appear indisputable that Machiavelli considered human beings as in general a pretty despicable lot. He

assumed that no one could be counted upon to do any act of charity or justice or even to respect the rights of his neighbor unless compelled to by fear of punishment. To have built a liberal philosophy on such a basis would have been a marvelous accomplishment.

Our author's contempt for human nature was closely paralleled by his pessimistic conception of government and history. Like many of the philosophers of classical antiquity, he denied the doctrine of continuing progress. In his *History of Florence* he wrote that "the general course of changes that occur in states is from a condition of order to one of disorder, and from the latter they pass again to one of order." The affairs of this world seldom remain static. When they have reached their depth of debasement, they begin to improve, since they cannot sink lower. Everything moves in an unescapable cycle, and no one can do more than slightly retard or briefly accelerate the wheel of fortune. He conceived of government as essentially a device for balancing evil forces against each other. The more power men get, the more certain they are to abuse it. Consequently, the proper solution is to use the ambitions of one man or set of men to check the ambitions of another, and thereby prevent intolerable oppression. Only the perpetual clash of rival contenders for power can guarantee "liberty" to the masses.

Machiavelli's disdain for the weaknesses and follies of human nature led him at times to doubt the value and even the practicability of popular government. Though he definitely preferred a republic to a monarchy, in the *Prince* he lauded the kingdom of France as a "well-ordered" state. Elsewhere he described the tendency of the people to fall into error unless guided by the counsels of one or more men of wisdom in whom they have confidence. He considered the people prone to be carried away by some "illusive good," which ultimately brings ruin to the state. He declared that the opinions of deliberative assemblies were "apt to be contrary to all reason" unless "directed by superior men." He thought that the work of establishing or reforming a constitution should be left almost exclusively to a single enlightened individual. While in the *Discourses* he extolled republics for their stability, in the *History of Florence* he described them as commonly exposed to frequent revolutions, "which make them pass, not, as is generally believed, from servitude to liberty, but from servitude to license."

A republic which would fit Machiavelli's conception would have to be one in which the great majority of the people would play but a minor role. He argued that only a small number of men ever attain a position "that entitles them to command." The others are satisfied merely to live in security, and, as long as they enjoy freedom from oppression, are perfectly content to live under laws which allow to the ruler extensive powers. The author would permit the people to choose certain magistrates, probably of subordinate rank, and to participate in deliberative assemblies, but he would entrust them with only a modicum of control over administration or the formulation of public policy.

In certain respects Machiavelli's political theory smacked of conservatism and even of reaction. The universal touchstone he applied to forms of government was stability. True, he regarded popular uprisings and disturbances as indications of the health of the state, but he did not desire that any of them should succeed. He could tolerate revolts but not revolutions. Among the constitutions he qualifiedly admired was that of Lycurgus, who established a government "which maintained itself for over eight hundred years in the most perfect tranquillity." In general, however, he recognized that constitutions and governments would need to be renovated from time to time, but only for the purpose of bringing them back to their original principles. No matter how profound the economic and social changes, any republic was becoming corrupt if it departed in the slightest from its original foundations.

No account of the supposed liberalism of Machiavelli would be complete without consideration of his theories on war. Though he frequently alluded to the dangers of excessive indulgence in conquest, he regarded war, within limits, as a perfectly normal procedure for increasing the power and wealth of the state. He denied, moreover, that any state could long endure without cultivating the art of war. Contempt for this art is the principal reason why princes lose their states, but republics neglect it also at their imminent peril. Even if a republic should choose to live without molesting others, others will molest it. But still greater dangers will certainly flow from despising the ways of war. Prolonged peace enervates nations and destroys internal unity. The combination of these factors, or either of them separately, will be likely to result in disaster. Machiavelli held that the martial virtues were more conducive to liberty than their opposites. He indicted Christianity on the ground that it glori-

fied humility and submissiveness, while its ceremonies were "gentle solemnities" with nothing of "energy or ferocity" in them. He even went so far as to commend war as a kind of hygiene for the human race. When countries become overpopulated, war plays the role of one of nature's purgatives, in order "that mankind, having been chastised and reduced in numbers, may become better and live with more convenience."

Finally, it must be recognized that our celebrated author justified ruthlessness and bestowed his blessing upon those who employed it for what he considered laudable purposes. Contrary to the claims of some of his detractors, he never argued that barbarity was a virtue, but he did not hesitate to recommend its use for reasons of state. When the safety of the country is at stake, he declared, no considerations of justice or injustice, or of humanity or cruelty, should be allowed to intervene. Rulers should not scruple to put to death any of their rivals who they think may harbor envy or evil passions against them. For reasons of national unity, Romulus was entirely justified in putting his brother to death, even though the latter had committed no crime. In like manner, Moses, "for the purpose of insuring the observance of his laws and institutions," was fully warranted in ordering the execution of a large number of persons who opposed his designs. Despite all that has been said by way of apology, Machiavelli did laud the methods of Cesare Borgia and hold him up as an example to be imitated by all new princes. Not one word of criticism did he direct against him except the argument that he blundered in permitting the election of Julius II as Pope. His failure in the end was due not to the brutality of his methods but to the extreme "malignity of fortune."

IV

After correlating the essential elements in Machiavelli's political theory, the conclusion seems warranted that there was comparatively little liberalism in it. Such appears to be the case when we consider the term either in its ancient or its modern meaning. Historic liberalism, from the Stoics to the twentieth century, has rested upon three positive assumptions which, in addition to the negative elements previously described, have given it its character as a distinctive philosophy: (1) There is a higher law of humanity and justice which takes pre-eminence over the welfare of separate states and peoples; (2) individuals and minorities have rights which even the will of the majority cannot override; (3) edu-

cation, persuasion, compromise, and judicial settlement are better than force and violence as means of preventing and resolving conflicts among human beings.

Each of the foregoing basic assumptions was rejected by Machiavelli. For the higher law of humanity and justice, he substituted "liberty," which meant primarily security and also a vigorous and aggressive national life free from subjection to foreigners. Instead of advocating respect for the rights of individuals and minorities, he subordinated everything to the good of the majority. One basis of his preference for the republican form of government was his contention that those for whose benefit any action was taken in a republic would be so numerous that they could always carry the measure against the few who would be injured by it. In place of methods of persuasion and conciliation he preached a gospel of force and justified violence as a short cut to "order." Efforts to postpone or avoid a conflict he regarded as signs of weakness, and he glorified war, or at least preparation for it, as the health of the state. He seemed deeply concerned lest violence should not be employed in sufficient measure. Ruthless extermination of one's enemies was his slogan, or else no action against them at all. Halfway measures are always pernicious. For a few individuals to be the victims of cruelty is infinitely better than for a whole country to be plagued by disorder and the persistence of strife.

The keynote of Machiavelli's political philosophy was the simple principle of utility. Above everything else he was a patriot, supremely devoted to the welfare of his country. Whatever contributed to that welfare was good, whatever detracted from it was bad. For this reason he taught that a just war is one which is necessary, and he urged conquerors to observe the rules of chastity and justice to the conquered in order to win their esteem. Perhaps the utilitarian basis of his political morality can be illustrated even better by his attitude toward religion. He advised rulers to be diligent in preserving the purity of all religious observances, and to treat them with proper respect, "for where religion exists it is easy to introduce armies and discipline," and the people will be kept "well conducted and united." It is not necessary, moreover, that the doctrines of the religion should be entirely true. Even though the ruler is convinced that they are false, he should not scruple to uphold them, and even to

magnify their importance, if they can be made to serve the interests of the state.

To classify Machiavelli as an arch conservative would, of course, represent a distortion of the truth. He did not worship the *status quo,* else he could never have shown so flaming a zeal for the liberation of Italy. Though he admired stability, that simply meant that he was opposed to change by factional upheavals or revolutions. On the other hand, it would be just as inaccurate to describe him as a fascist or any other kind of totalitarian. He was probably too wise to have committed the blunders which led to the downfall of Mussolini and Hitler. Although both dictators admired him, and Hitler is supposed to have kept a copy of the *Prince* under his bed, neither took his warnings very seriously. Nevertheless, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Machiavelli would have approved of some of the policies that made these modern despots infamous. He probably would have endorsed the murder of Matteotti in Fascist Italy, and the Blood Purge of June 30, 1934, in Nazi Germany. He would doubtless have justified the invasion of Holland and Belgium in 1940 as a contribution to the success of the war against France, and he would have paid no more attention to nonaggression pacts than did Hitler. It seems possible that he would have lent his approval to many of the misdeeds perpetrated by the Fuehrer on the eve of World War II —the violations of the Treaty of Versailles, the absorption of Austria, the incorporation of the Sudetenland, the rearmament of Germany—for all were done with a view to increasing national strength and unity and, in the eyes of a majority of the German people, were necessary. It is not inconceivable that he would have defended some of the atrocities committed during the war—the bombing of Rotterdam or the Lidice massacre, for instance, on the ground that they would shorten the conflict and bring order to a distracted continent. Nor would he have regarded misdeeds like those of twentieth-century dictators as highly exceptional, to be committed only in the face of life-and-death emergencies. One of the most revealing statements the Florentine philosopher ever made was his assertion that the ruler would *often* be required, "in order to maintain the state, to act against faith, against charity, against humanity, and against religion."

THE PROMISE OF AMERICAN LIBERALISM

By WILLIAM G. CARLETON

NOW THAT THE CONSERVATIVES are again having their innings in American life, where are the liberals who just a decade ago were riding high in American politics? Where are those liberals who, like the liberals of every age, believing in the wisdom of gradualism over revolution, throw their weight against the dominant privileged forces of their time and in favor of a wider opportunity for the underprivileged and the common man—thereby, incidentally, making possible more uncommon men? It has been suggested that the liberals are "tired," that they are "lost," that their task is finished—in short, that liberalism in America has been "dealt." It also has been suggested that if American liberalism is to survive its pattern must change, that in the future American liberalism will become leftism, more class-conscious, more systematic, more doctrinaire, more uncompromising, more ruthless than the American liberalism of the past.

The truth is that American liberals are vigorously alive and kicking and that they are operating much as American liberals of the past have always operated. American liberals have merely retired to reform their ranks and their program, preparatory to another assault on "privilege," and from innumerable committees, conferences, speeches, tracts, editorials, books, and legislative and congressional hearings and reports, we may already gather what American liberals are thinking and planning for the future. Moreover, if their present-day behavior reveals some of the "ideological" spirit of European leftism it reveals much more the old empirical spirit of historical American liberalism.

To say that American liberalism is through is to say that American democracy is through, because American democracy is manifestly the

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product of successive waves of triumphant American liberalism throughout American history. Democracy is the end-result of a series of evolutionary thrusts spearheaded by American liberals. As Whitman saw, American democracy is the accumulation of "each age with its own growth" so charged with vitality as to be contained only by the vastness of the future.

In all American history there never has been a farewell to reform. American democracy always has been regarded as an unfinished task. It always has been keenly aware of shifting new frontiers. It always has recognized "the shores dimly seen."

We have more democracy today than we had yesterday. We shall have more democracy tomorrow than we have today. And American liberals are busy today planning for the American democracy of tomorrow.

II

Democratic progress in America has not been even. Some periods have seen great progress, others scarcely any. The discerning historian can, I think, discover five distinct waves of democratic advance, waves which largely account for the American democracy of today.

First, there was the ferment and popular upsurge of the period of the American Revolution. This was the period of the Declaration of Independence, the sweeping away of royal and proprietary governments, the uprooting of aristocratic privileges, the establishment of republican state governments, the enunciation of state bills of rights, the abolition of primogeniture and entail, the disestablishment of state churches and the coalescence of the great principles of religious freedom, the spreading of secular education and the founding of the first state universities, the reform in the penal codes, the end of the slave trade in most of the states, the abolition of slavery in many of the Northern states, the overthrow of aristocratic plural voting in Pennsylvania, the widening of the suffrage in numerous states. This was the era of America's first great democrats —Samuel Adams, Tom Paine, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson.

Second, there was the period of Jacksonian democracy and its aftermath, the gusty and lusty 1830's and 1840's when democracy demonstrated for the first time its immense vitality, its buffalo strength. It was in this period that the last vestiges of indentured servitude were swept away, imprisonment for debt was abolished, labor unions were

legalized and allowed to organize, effective lien laws for laborers were enacted, equal universal education was spread. It was in this period that the federal government sought to divorce itself from dependence upon private banks to become free to follow an independent course by the establishment of its own treasury. It was in this period that America may be said to have become a political democracy with the abolition of property qualifications to vote and hold office, the adoption of universal white male suffrage in state after state, the great increase in the number of offices made elective by popular vote, the throwing open of the state governorships and presidential electors to popular election, the development of the party nominating convention and the general democratizing of party machinery.

Third, there was the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction. This was the period of the Homestead Act and the period when the Negro became free, a citizen, and a voter. If the Jackson era emancipated the poor white man, Reconstruction emancipated the poor black man. Thus the sons of the Puritans, the abolition uplifters, joined hands with the subalterns of industry to widen the democratic way of life. Admission of Charles Sumner, Thad Stevens, Zach Chandler, Ben Wade, and even Ben Butler to the Valhalla of democratic saints always goes hard with agrarian liberals and even with some proletarian liberals. But Karl Marx—no less—writing in Greeley's *Tribune* seems to put them there, and any long view of history, it seems, must conclude that while these men opened the way for the robber barons of the following decades they also contributed mightily to the cause of human freedom.

Fourth, there was the Progressive era just after the turn of the century, from about 1900 to 1917. This was the period when the Henry George - Henry D. Lloyd - Peter Altgeld - Populist agitation of the 1890's at last bore fruit; the period of the muckrakers; the period in which it was claimed we were going to cure the evils of an emerging industrial society by more democracy; the period of Bryan, LaFollette, Teddy Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. And how was democracy broadened and strengthened in this period? By the initiative, the referendum, the recall. By the direct party primary. By the popular election of United States Senators. By woman suffrage. By an avalanche of social and economic legislation in the various states. By the adoption of progressive tax policies based on graduation and the ability to pay. By conservation

programs. By the gradual adoption by the federal government of a program of regulation of big business rather than a program of destruction. By the acceptance by most liberals, at long last, of the necessity for big government and even for big business, duly regulated. By the marriage of Hamiltonian centralization with Jeffersonian democracy—proclaimed by Herbert Croly, admitted by Theodore Roosevelt, and practiced, though not admitted, by Woodrow Wilson.

Fifth, there was the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt with its full acceptance of the doctrine of the positive welfare state, the democratic service state. As the New Deal recedes into historical perspective, we must expect to see prominent New Dealers from Roosevelt down take their places in the calendar of democratic saints.

These great liberal movements of the past which have brought us our American democracy do not represent patterns or integrated wholes. They have been pragmatic, empirical, improvised. They have represented a combination of redresses for a host of specific and often apparently unrelated grievances.

Each great liberal thrust in America has been followed by a period of reaction. After the ferment of the American Revolution came the Federalist conservatism; after Jacksonian democracy came the time-serving toryism of Pierce and Buchanan; after the radicalism of Reconstruction came the brown decades of Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley; after the Progressive era came the Red scare of 1919 and the "back to normalcy" of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover. But by European standards even the most ruthless of these American reactions—the "black cockade" Federalism of 1798 and the Mitchell Palmer witch-hunting of 1919 — have been mild. Even our conservative parties have had liberal wings and groups sincerely interested in developing a democratic society. Compared to Europe our politics have always been blurred and bland. Those who see American fascism around every corner should take note of this fluid character of American politics.

Each conservative reaction has for the most part accepted the work of the preceding democratic advance. For instance, the "back to normalcy" administrations of the 1920's did not repeal the measures of the Roosevelt "New Nationalism" and the Wilson "New Freedom." In part this has been due to the fact that great changes are soon institution-

alized and difficult if not impossible to uproot. In part it has been due to the popularity of the democratic measures, a popularity which has extended even to members of conservative parties themselves, and the fear, even of the reaction, to fly in the face of that popularity. Hence, when a new deal is dealt it usually "stays dealt." There are, of course, many people in America, as Tocqueville pointed out over a century ago, who do not accept democracy and who would like to undo the work of successive waves of democratic advance—for instance the men of the Essex Junto and of the Kent and Hone clubs—but these men in every age since the American Revolution have been in a minority and have never been able to prevail even in periods of reactionary triumph.

During every interval of reaction, however, conservatives have erroneously thought that democracy had gone far enough, that it would advance no more, that it had reached its permanent and fixed form. But liberals have an uncomfortable habit of not knowing when they are down. In periods when they are out of power they continue to ferret out abuses, expose grievances, write pamphlets and books, attend conferences, organize committees, and in a thousand and one ways prepare for that inevitable day when the swing of the pendulum again places them in power and gives them another chance to try their hand at widening democracy.

And what causes the swing of the pendulum, what causes another constructive wave of liberalism? Any number of things. Depressions and hard times. Intolerably high prices. (The Wilson-Roosevelt progressivism of 1912 was greatly helped by "the high cost of living" at that time.) The emergence of new and hitherto inarticulate groups. A climax of moral agitation and the convergence of moral enthusiasms. A too-long lease of power by conservatives and accumulated discontent with the conservatives in power.

III

Although now out of power, liberals on many different fronts are busy preparing for the next great democratic upthrust in this country. In books, in speeches, in committee reports our modern muckrakers—smooth, streamlined, urbane—men like David Lilienthal, Harvey Fergusson, Paul H. Appleby, Lewis Corey, John Gunther, Robert S. Allen, G. Bromley Oxnam, Morris L. Ernst, Max Lerner, John Fischer, Ellis

Arnall, Claude Pepper, Joseph C. O'Mahoney, James E. Murray, and countless others—are already giving shape to the American democracy of the future. (These men do not always agree on the direction the future liberalism ought to take, and philosophically some of them are miles apart, but each in his way is contributing more or less to the liberalism of tomorrow.) And what are likely to be the leading measures of the next period of American liberalism?

First, there will be a widening of political democracy. In our concentration on social and economic measures we are likely to forget that *political* democracy in America is still an unfinished task.

The trend toward outlawing political parties, denying them places on the official ballot, and creating difficulties in the way of getting on the official ballot will be checked. New devices will be developed to guarantee Negro suffrage. Already there is a movement on foot for a federal law providing that all party nominees for the United States Senate and the House of Representatives be chosen in federal primaries to be held in every state on the same day and prohibiting tax and literacy qualifications. This, of course, would be much more sweeping than the mere outlawing of the poll taxes, and it would strike at new Southern maneuvers to circumvent recent federal court decisions and to continue disfranchisement of the Negro—such maneuvers as the Boswell Amendment in Alabama, which makes it necessary for voters to "understand" the constitution, and the setting up of private party primaries as in South Carolina. Now if such a law is ever enacted, we can look for a renewal of the agitation to choose party nominees for President and Vice-President in national party primaries rather than in national conventions. Also, we may expect to see a strong revival of the ever-recurring proposal that the electoral college be abolished and the President and Vice-President be elected directly by the voters.

Perhaps the most important plank in the program for political democracy will be to cut down the flagrantly disproportionate weight enjoyed by the rural voter over the city voter. For some purposes, one rural voter equals ten or twenty or fifty or even one hundred city voters. This is true not merely of the county unit system of making Democratic party nominations in Georgia—probably the most glaring instance of the inequity—but it also applies to the apportionment of seats in upper houses of state legislatures and even lower houses of state legislatures and

to a lesser degree even to the apportionment of representatives in the national House of Representatives. This already despotic arrangement is aggravated by the frequent and high-handed failure of rural-dominated legislatures to make the periodic reapportionments "required" by the state constitutions. And the problem is enormously complicated by the well-nigh impossibility of amending some state constitutions, an obstacle the next liberal movement will have to tackle, in spite of the difficulties. Now some studies have been made to show the enormity of the existing situation—how our great cities are enchained and rendered helpless to solve their municipal problems and how on measure after measure the statewide popular will is thwarted by our modern rotten boroughs.

Where a few rotten boroughs in a state have the veto power in the legislature, those rotten boroughs will become the scenes of wholesale corruption. As Lincoln Steffens has sagely pointed out, political corruption is not a matter of men or classes or education or character of any sort; it is a matter of pressure seeking the path of least resistance. America's vicious system of rotten boroughs continues to exist because powerful interests, themselves located in the great urban centers, fear the cities and the millions of white-collar employees and wage-earners living in those cities, and find that rotten boroughs can be converted into pocket boroughs to check the influences they fear. Increasingly, the aim of our liberals will be to make people and not geography the basis of our democracy.

Second, there will be a widening of educational opportunities. The decisive educational differentials are not between the North and the South; they are between the urban and the rural states and between the urban and rural sections of the same state. State and federal legislation will be proposed to eradicate these differentials. And in line with the recommendations of the President's Commission on Higher Education, a fight will be made for the multiplication of community colleges offering free education for the first two years of college; for an enormous increase in government-paid scholarships to worthy students in colleges and universities; for the elimination of quota systems based on racial discrimination; and for a vast and desperately needed program of adult education. In addition, teachers' bills of rights will be enacted into law, bills of rights which provide our teachers more secure tenure,

greater academic freedom, and the right to be normal human beings. Moreover, measures will be taken to make our school boards and our boards of trustees of public colleges and universities representative of all people—of farmers, of wage earners, of white-collar employees—and not just of lawyers and business men. The narrow nature of the present control of our colleges and universities has been brought home to all of us by Hubert Park Beck's penetrating book, and we shall more and more come to recognize that the freedom of our colleges and universities is the concern of all citizens in a free society.

Third, there will be a broadening of civil liberties. From Olmsted to Siegfried, from Beaumont to Ehrenberg, almost every traveller in America has pointed to racial prejudices in the midst of vaunted democracy. But today Americans are stirred about this blot on our civilization as they have rarely been stirred before. We recently have seen a plethora of books and novels with Semitic and Negro prejudices as their main themes. The next liberal movement in America will go much farther than ever before in protecting the legal, political, educational, and economic rights of racial minorities. More and more states will copy New York's antidiscrimination law, will carry it to greater lengths, and will adopt criminal codes punishing those who publicly belittle and ridicule people on racial grounds. A permanent federal civil rights commission reporting directly to the executive and similar commissions in the states probably will be established. There probably will be created a full division in the Department of Justice to protect people in their civil liberties. Almost certainly there will be passed a federal Fair Employment Practice Act prohibiting all forms of discrimination in private employment based on race, color, creed, or national origin. Also, a federal antilynching law likely will be passed, and a federal law to end segregation based on race, color, creed, or nationality will be attempted. Freedom of speech and press will come to be regarded as social necessities as well as individual rights, and they will be enlarged to mean freedom of information and the right of the public to have all points of view presented—a "full production" of ideas—freedom to read and hear and see as well as to write and speak and produce.

Fourth, there will be a widening of social security both as to groups included and areas covered. Federal social security ultimately will come to include in some way everybody engaged in making a living. The

present state systems for state employees will be merged with the federal system. At the present time there are grave inequities in our social security organization: the absence of any social security for some groups, the fact that some groups are in inferior nongovernmental systems, the fact that the groups in our state systems can be victimized by their employers who know that employees who have paid into a state system are to a degree immobilized and reluctant to take other work or work in other states for fear of forfeiting their social security already built up. Social security also will come to cover insurance for medical care and hospitalization, not just as a subsidy to the poor and underprivileged as our "radical" Tories like Robert A. Taft advocate, but for all groups. As social security is widened, our public assistance program eventually can be terminated. Closely connected with the question of social security and adequate medical care is the question of housing. The next liberal wave will see a great reduction in the power of real estate boards and an increase in public housing projects.

Fifth, there will be still more conservation of our natural resources. If any doubt still exists, oil found in our tidelands and on our continental shelf will be secured to the federal government and will be conserved and controlled for all the people. The Great Lakes Seaway probably will be completed. There will be more river developments like the Tennessee Valley Authority—a Missouri Valley Development, an Arkansas Valley Development, a Columbia Valley Development. "What happens to a river valley, what happens to the land—forests, minerals, farms—is all part of one indivisible process." River development means not only electricity and navigation and irrigation and flood control, but saving the top soil on hillsides, reforestation, techniques in restoring fertility to barren or exhausted soil, and industrial development. Control of flood, drought, dust storms, erosion, and of the destruction of forests and grass cover constitutes a single pattern. There will be increased electrification on our farms. Electricity is a richly rewarding cycle—the more it is used the cheaper it becomes.

Sixth, the next liberal wave undoubtedly will carry us farther toward a solution of the problem of monopoly and quasimonopoly and toward adequate control of the Two Hundred corporations—more or less—which bulk so large in our economy. This question of the adequate control of big industry—both management and labor—is still

America's number one domestic problem because it involves effective control of business cycles, the elimination of economic booms and busts. Senator Ralph E. Flanders of Vermont recently commented that under present conditions of bigness "the profit determinations and the wage negotiations of our major industries and union organizations cease to be private matters. They are public matters and must be determined with the public interest in mind." Senator O'Mahoney has proposed a plan for federal incorporation of our two hundred—more or less—key companies. And John Fischer, reviving and enlarging a proposal made by Theodore Roosevelt in *The Outlook* back in 1911, has described how these companies might be required, under federal charters, to guarantee responsible behavior with respect to output, wages, and prices, and to forego cartel agreements with foreign concerns. At the same time, a growing segment of American liberalism, drawing on British experience and impressed by the interconnection of monopoly and current high prices (and remembering the part played by maldistribution of income in causing the great depression of the 1930's and the part played by "sticky prices" in prolonging that depression), is turning to democratic socialism—the gradual nationalizing of the most basic of our key industries—as a way out.

Thus American liberals are responding to the problems of a mature industrial society in the American way. They are seeking to retain both liberty and security by enlarging the dimensions of the democratic process.

IV

In their current discussions and probings, liberals are doing some of the wishful thinking and making some of the mistakes that have characterized them in the past.

For one thing, some liberals are emphasizing "colonialism" too much. They are picturing the South and the West as the colonies of Eastern capitalists, as the exploited regions without much voice in their economic life. Now there is an element of truth in this—and it is well to fight for the elimination of sectional freight-rate differentials and other discriminatory measures that operate against sections—but it is highly exaggerated. If there is exploitation in America, Eastern workers, white-collar employees, farmers, and consumers are victims of it as well as those from the South and the West. The hardships of inflation

and of depression are felt as keenly in the East as in the South and West. Most inequities are not sectional inequities; they are group inequities that cut across sectional lines. It may sound a little more "radical" and a little less "respectable" to say this, but it is necessary to say it for purposes of clear thinking.

For another thing, some liberals still like to hurl verbalisms at big business and to denounce trusts and cartels. They still like to use the language of "trust busting" days. Ellis Arnall, for instance, has a way of speaking of "inflexible opposition to monopolies, cartels, and agreements in restaint of free enterprise and emphasis upon individual freedom." Now when liberals persist in talking this way they should immediately be asked to "put up or shut up." What does such language mean? That the big concerns should be broken up into smaller units? If so, how? Antitrust legislation has been on the federal statute books since 1890, but since that time the process of economic concentration and centralization has steadily gone on. The antitrust laws have not checked this trend; they have hardly even slowed it. Every census shows a larger proportionate share of American business done by *big* business. Now if the antitrust laws could not effectively check this trend sixty and fifty years ago, how may they be expected to do so today when decisive political power has passed from small businessmen to the millions of wage-earners and white-collar employees of big business and when our whole economy has come to be geared to big business? Speeches breathing "inflexible opposition" to monopolies and cartels may have an emotionally nostalgic appeal, but they are not conducive to clear thinking or to the solution of the problems of modern industrial society.

For still another thing, some liberals are too hopeful about economic decentralization and political decentralization. It is well to see that the states and localities have enough sources of revenue to meet adequately their modern obligations. And it is also well to encourage geographical decentralization of industry and the spreading of industry to the South and West. But such geographical decentralization, even if it comes, may not result in economic or managerial decentralization. Ownership and control may still be in the already existing big corporations. And it is doubtful if the development of industry in the South and West will reduce materially the decisive impact of big business on our economic life. Southern and western industry, even if locally owned at first, will also in

time grow to giant proportions. Bigness seems to be the inevitable offspring of modern technology.

No doubt the federal administration itself can be advantageously decentralized in the interests of efficiency and manageability. But, as Paul H. Appleby has pointed out, *there must first be centralization before there is decentralization.* A power involving a national concern must become a federal power before it is administratively decentralized. When this fundamental is agreed upon, then the way is open for many kinds of federal decentralization. What are some of these? The federally chartered independent corporation. Regional and even local management in river valley authorities, co-operatives of the REA type, public power districts, soil conservation districts, and so forth. It must be remembered that there is decentralization and decentralization, and a distinction must be drawn between a decentralization which futilely attempts to restore the administration of essentially national concerns to states and localities and one which seeks to decentralize the administration of those essentially national concerns *within* the framework of the federal government.

V

And what of the big government the more recent waves of liberal advance have given us? Will not centralization, even if modified by some decentralization *within* the framework of the federal government, lead eventually to the death of democracy? Is there really such a thing as big democracy? Would it not be fatuous to ignore the pessimistic warnings of such men as William G. Sumner and Henry Adams, who in the first decade of this century foretold the decline of democracy during the course of the century?

To answer these questions, perhaps we had better analyze briefly the nature of this thing called American democracy. It has never been merely political; it has never been merely structural, procedural, formal.

True, American democracy is a *method* of arriving at government decisions. This involves civil liberties, representative government, universal suffrage, opposition parties, open campaigns, free elections. These are the essentials, and while Americans have developed elaborate rationales in defense of their particular system (a written constitution, federalism, separation of powers), these do not bulk as large as the essentials. Nor are Americans greatly disturbed when dialecticians and philoso-

phers argue such points as the relative weight of various individuals in a democracy, the limited scope of popular decision within the narrow range of possible choices, the frequency with which the best thing that can be said about a decision is that it is one to which a sufficient minority does not sufficiently object.

But in addition to being a method of making government decisions, American democracy has a social and economic *content.* Democracy involves a high standard of living, freedom from being pushed around by the other fellow, social fluidity, human mobility, the ability of the average man to get ahead, the opportunity for all to have an equal chance for a better chance. In short, the Homestead Act in one generation and the Social Security Act in another generation are just as much a part of American democratic thinking as jury trial, freedom of speech, and universal suffrage.

One of the most wholesome things about American life is the way the average American rejects the old fine-spun legal distinctions between rights and privileges. To the average American, jury trial, free press, universal suffrage, popular education, the right to organize and bargain collectively, and social security are all part of American democracy, regardless of historical sequence or preferential positions in law.

It will be said that if indeed American democracy is as much interested in social security as in free speech, then it is in a dangerous way of succumbing to the blandishments of fascists or communists who can always promise more material comforts and a higher standard of physical life. If Americans put so much store by material things, could not a Huey Long with Ku Klux Klan backing come along and get voted into power by promising Americans the moon? No, because the *methods* of democracy are as important as its social aspirations, and a fascist or a communist organization in America could not long conceal its real identity or long mask its contempt for the democratic *process.*

American democracy found itself compatible with laissez-faire capitalism as long as laissez-faire capitalism provided or held out reasonable promise of the continuous social and economic advancement of the common man. American democracy is finding itself compatible with regulated or controlled capitalism in a day when conditions and circumstances make government controls necessary if ordinary men are to find adequate social and economic opportunities to achieve their social

and economic aspirations. American democracy could probably find itself compatible with socialism. (Indeed, the strongest and clearest democratic notes in the world are being sounded today by the Socialists in power in the British government. These Socialists refuse to outlaw any opposition party—even the fascists—and they have amended the old Crown Proceedings Act in a way which for the first time allows a private citizen to bring an action against the government.) But American democracy will never find itself compatible with either fascism or communism because fascism and communism depart from democratic methods and spell dictatorship. In short, American democracy will continue to insist on *both* its methods and its content.

In our efforts to give American democracy more social content—a social content that depends upon bigger government—are we not jeopardizing free elections and civil liberties? Now since the turn of the century we gradually have been developing the centralized welfare state. During that time civil liberties for our minority groups and for the average man have steadily broadened. Our elections, instead of being less free, are, if anything, becoming more free all the time. Employers make fewer attempts to coerce employees and creditors to put the squeeze on debtors.

Will not government become too centralized, too remote, too bureaucratic for the average man to make his influence felt? Not if federal agencies become increasingly regional and local and steadily develop grass-root connections, as David Lilienthal and Dean Appleby suggest.

And then there are our much-maligned pressure groups which, as Harvey Fergusson points out in his *People and Power,* may be among the most important agencies in safeguarding liberty and in making big government operate in a democratic way. As we have enlarged government we have also enlarged our organized groups, and organized groups increasingly are in position not only to check each other but also to check government, even big government.

There always have been pressure groups in government. In most of the historic past these were few in number; they "pressured" in their own narrow interests; they exploited the unorganized mass. But in modern democracy many groups organize to take part in the social and political process, and the more there are, the more virile democracy is likely to be. Our current confusion is due to the fact that in our Ameri-

can democracy the older and richer groups are still better organized and more articulate than the newer and poorer ones. But the drive of an industrial society is toward more numerous, more diversified, better organized groups. As more of our workers, farmers, white-collar employees, lower professional classes, intellectuals, and consumers are better organized we shall have less exploitation, more stability in society, more rationality in politics, more social justice, and a more genuine democracy.

What of the individual in this interplay of group forces? His freedom is becoming a reality even beyond mere legal guarantees, for liberty springs from diversity and organized power alone can check organized power.

What would happen if one group or alliance of groups representing the numerical majority—"the democracy of numbers"—gained control of government indefinitely and ignored the minority groups? What then of democracy? This—the tyranny of numbers—is what worried Tocqueville and other thinkers of the Jacksonian period when political democracy was in its infancy. But the danger has proved to be an illusion. There is never a permanent majority. Majorities are transitory because society is dynamic; new group alignments and realignments are always being made; groups split and proliferate; and newer groups are constantly rising out of the older ones in the never-ending process of group conflict and compromise. This endless flux of majorities was an aspect of democracy which fascinated the late Mr. Justice Holmes.

The chances are, then, that we can continue to add to the social content of democracy without weakening the democratic procedures. Indeed, broadening the social content of democracy probably will result also in broadening, not weakening, the methods of democracy. If so, we need not fear the next liberal advance, for the liberal advance of the future will operate like the liberal advances of the past and result in widening both the substance and the processes of American democracy.

A STORY

YEARS BROUGHT TO AN END

By WARREN BECK

I HAD SLEPT SOUNDLY, and when I opened my eyes to the well-remembered room and saw that the sun was high, for a moment I felt an old concern. If I were late for school, I'd lose my place as head monitor, with its envied duty of raising and lowering the American flag on the tall white pole in the schoolyard. Then I was fully awake and knew I'd never be late to eighth grade again, or to high school or college classes, or to any reveille in World War II, either, no matter what further tardiness might be charged against me. I stretched and relaxed, savoring my brief escape from routines and immediate anxieties. I lit a cigarette and looked at the same flowered wallpaper. Again I was drawn into counting the puffy red blooms along diagonal lines and building them up into large quadrangles, just as I used to do long before I learned that a rose is a rose and that is all you know on earth, however much more you may think you need to know.

In the kitchen under my room I could hear my plump Aunt Letty thumping around as vigorously as ever. The clank of the iron door on the range suggested that she had put in another stick of wood. She had allowed me, as guest and grownup, the privilege of sleeping as late as I liked, but I knew how it must be fretting her now in mid-morning not to have my breakfast over and its dishes done. She, of course, would have eaten long ago, and fed her flock of chickens, and dusted every room downstairs. A boyhood habit of duty wakened too and nudged me. I stubbed my cigarette and rolled out of bed. Hurriedly I splashed my changed face in the same big china bowl on the washstand, combed my hair, and went down unshaved, in bathrobe and slippers.

My aunt hailed me with a relieved look and hearty questioning as to how I had rested. She hustled me into my old place at the kitchen

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table, where I could look out on the back yard. The boundaries of her big vegetable garden were unmoved. The wire chicken-pen stood the same, and the same wren-houses, though much weathered, hung from the two apple trees. Aunt Letty had set the table for me with her good heavy cut-glass sugar bowl and cream pitcher, which I knew as an extra touch, and the hand-painted salt and pepper shakers too. She had rallied the regulation dish of grape jelly, the jar of plum jam, the monumental slab of butter with a silver knife beside it, the large glass dish of stewed prunes, and the red-lacquered round tin box I knew must be full of fresh ginger cookies. I counted the stacked slices of her homemade bread; there were six. Aunt Letty came intently bearing the coffee pot straight from the back of the range and filled my cup with as careful speed as if I were an emergency case. Returning to the stove, she poured the grease off the pile of bacon and asked me whether three eggs would be enough. I persuaded her that two would be a great plenty. She had just cracked them into the hot skillet when the phone rang, one long, two shorts.

"Oh, dear," she exclaimed, flushing, "that's my ring."

"I know," I said, and got up. "Here, you go answer."

I reached out for the spatula she was holding, but she hesitated, confused. Gently I took the spatula from her hand.

"Go on with you, Auntie," I told her. "I'm a big boy now and a bachelor of long standing; I can take eggs out of a skillet."

"Well—" she said, smiling uncertainly at me, and then the phone rang again, and she sobered and turned quickly, wiping her fingers on a clean handkerchief from her apron pocket as she went.

I served myself, sat down, and began to eat. I glanced at the chickens, those seemingly immortal birds stalking as mechanically as ever, pecking up the remainder of their morning's feed along the edges of the pen. Just below the kitchen window I could see the slanting old cellar door, and there was an enduring scar on the middle plank, where I now remembered having torn off a terrific splinter in the most painful way, but what I recalled most sharply was my embarrassment at having to accept my aunt's matter-of-fact first aid. My attention was pulled back to her same voice from the other room. Apparently the message was calamitous, for she was saying how awful, how terrible. I knew her head must be shaking again and again as I heard her tongue make those sharp cluckings with which she always deplored trouble, sorrow, or any

encroachment of sin or dust. The girl too, yes, my aunt was repeating, in a confirmatory tone that let me imagine her adding roger and over.

Then there was some discussion of how old he was, and my aunt was able to state that they had been talking about it at sewing circle last week—after all, everybody was talking about it, and no wonder—and old Mrs. Klein had said she knew for certain he was going on seventy. Whatever the other person on the wire may have replied to that, my aunt agreed with it completely, answering yes, yes, and clicking her tongue some more, and saying wouldn't you think so. Then my aunt took up the subject in her firmest tones; she supposed some people would say it seemed almost like a judgment, a judgment on him, and on the girl too, because heaven only knew what had been going on. Drinking, certainly; everbody knew that. And out in that car half the night or longer. My aunt was sorry for his daughters; the shame of it, and they both such good respectable women, and so faithful to the Sunday school and the church all these years.

All at once I felt sure I knew whom she was talking about, although I didn't know what. She would need some coffee after this, I decided, and I fetched a cup, saucer, and spoon from the pantry. When I heard her hang up, I got the pot and filled her cup. I motioned her to it as she entered, and she sat down without a word. She didn't speak while she helped herself to cream and sugar, nor while she stirred the coffee slowly, steadily, lengthily, staring at the small whirlpools. At last she laid the spoon in the saucer. Then she looked up at me.

"You remember Mr. Cooper?" she asked soberly. "Joe Cooper?"

So I had guessed it; it was old man Cooper. But all I said to my aunt was that sure, I remembered him, Mr. Cooper, he owned the big dairy farm west of town, he was superintendent of the Sunday school, wasn't he? Aunt Letty looked more solemn than ever as she said yes, he had been Sunday school superintendent for years, including that year I'd been staying with her, and for years after that; even after Mr. Cooper had sold his farm and retired to town he'd gone on being superintendent, she said. Until some time after his wife died, and that was only three or four years ago. But lately he'd changed. I didn't tell my aunt I knew he'd changed, much less how I knew it; I didn't say anything; I just looked receptive to the full account I could expect. She took a long sip of coffee and set down her cup.

"Well," she began, "what happened was that Joe Cooper got killed last night, or rather about two o'clock this morning. Him and a young girl he was with. Their car hit a culvert out just east of town on the Marysville road. They think he was taking the girl home; she lives—she lived on a farm about two miles out. They say she was no better than she should be. I heard she would come into Beeler's tavern—you know, in that red brick building down on the main corner—she'd come there nights, and he'd pick her up there. She wasn't the only one, I guess. Joe Cooper was tearing around like wild for the last year or so, right out in the open, as brazen as you please. First he started going to the movies, regularly, and he'd never done that before. Then he bought himself a new car, a yellow roadster, mind you, with a radio in it, and he drove around at all hours with the top down and the radio going full blast—dance music. Then one night he went into Beeler's, they say, and walked right up to the bar and ordered whiskey. I guess they soon got used to him being there; he began coming every night, right after he'd seen the movie. And the next thing they knew he was putting nickels in the phonograph box, and then even dancing with the girls, sometimes, whether he knew them or not, but I suppose that's only to be expected of girls who'd hang around in a saloon. That's the kind Joe Cooper took to running after. They say he spent his money like water. Of course he had plenty, but you'd think he'd have tried to save it for his two daughters, seeing they'd stayed at home and kept house for him and never married. Well, they'll get what's left now, I suppose. At least he never married one of those young things he was running around with, though they do say some of them were after him, for his money. Maybe one of them would have got him, if he'd gone on much longer, at the rate he was going. As I was just telling Cora, I suppose there may be those who will say it seems like a judgment on him."

She picked up her cup again. I lit a cigarette, taking the time to determine I wasn't going to tell my aunt I'd seen old Joe Cooper only the night before. No use bothering her with the disputable aspects of it I was musing over. So I dropped back to easier ground.

"I remember," I said, "how grave he always was in Sunday school but how he'd beam at us now and then when we were well-behaved. I remember the picnic he had for the whole school out at his farm, with gallons of homemade icecream. His wife and daughters dished it out

in big chunks. First though we had to stand quiet while he prayed, before we could have anything to eat. We boys had a baseball game in the pasture. His cherries were ripe, a whole orchard of them, and he gave us one tree—put ladders into it from all sides."

Aunt Letty stared enigmatically and then shook her head in that immemorial gesture of bewildered regret at which simple good women become so practiced.

"Who would have thought Joe Cooper would come to such an end," she murmured.

Then she got up heavily and crossed the room to the other window, where a row of potted geranium sprouts stood to catch the sun. She broke off a dry leaf from one plant and felt the dampness of its earth. My aunt was an indefatigable grower of geraniums, which she gave away as soon as she thought them handsome and sturdy enough to go out on their own; it must have taxed the town to supply her with old flower pots and to absorb the stream of plants she produced, but it was an economy that seemed to have stabilized itself. It was more than that, too, I saw now; it was something to keep your hand in, and to turn to instead of confronting the inscrutable head on.

Next it occurred to my aunt that the news might not yet have reached all her friends, so she asked me to excuse her a moment. I could hear her at the telephone, repeating details, and apparently securing entire concurrence in her opinion that it was awful, it was hard on his daughters, and there would be those who might say it seemed like a judgment. My aunt and her colleagues would take care of it, I thought; they would wedge the incident into the firm mosaic of their village life, though they might have to whittle it down some and smooth it off. Of course they not only had their method of estimating it, but they'd had time, during old Joe Cooper's decline from grace, to readjust their attitudes gradually. Whereas I had had to take it in one long stride; there he had been, last night, leaning comfortably against Beeler's juke-box, with a glass of whiskey and water in his hand, and I'd never have known him but for that look in his eye, that benign twinkle my amazed memory fumblingly connected with a Sunday school I had gone to in my thirteenth year.

That had been an altogether dreamy period anyhow; my lot then was novel and transitory, and my adolescent imagination had been

strangely stirred. My father had gone to Chile on a consultation in mining engineering and my mother had at last decided to go with him, the more readily when she found that my maiden aunt, my father's oldest sister, was eager to keep me for a whole year. I had visited at my Aunt Letty's before, of course, but always with my parents, and only during vacations, either at Christmas or in the summer. This time, without my parents, I came completely under my aunt's benevolent but strict governance. She inducted me into the whole life of a village boy. I was enrolled in the eighth grade, so cozy and settled in contrast with the teeming, turbulent junior high school I had known the year before in the city. And I was sent regularly to that little Sunday school where the robust and rustic Mr. Cooper, with a bushy head of graying hair and a clear intent eye in a weathered face, presided as superintendent, making the announcements, leading manfully in the responsive reading of psalms, and setting us all a cheerful, loud example, though slightly off key, as we plodded piously through such songs as "Trust and obey—there is no other way—to be happy in Jesus—but to trust and obey."

Every week Mr. Cooper blandly regimented with him to Sunday school and church his wife and two grown daughters. Mrs. Cooper had a plump smooth face and an innocent serene eye, and among the other good women of that little congregation she seemed almost speechless. Twice though I had heard her mild voice as I stood nearby; once at a box social in the church basement in midwinter and one May morning on the church steps after services, and both times she was saying the same thing to another woman—"I think so too." A most agreeable person, I decided in my boy's wisdom, and my opinion was substantiated by the great hunk of ice cream she dug out for me at that picnic and passed over wordlessly but with a real smile. The Cooper daughters had not struck me so pleasantly; they were angular, beginning to wither out of young womanhood even then, and going somewhat severe about the face; I sensed that they fell far short of their father and mother, perhaps not in conformity but in spirit. Especially far short of their father as he stood before us on Sunday morning, pleasantly announcing the attendance ratings of the different classes, or reading the assigned piece of scripture with a gravity all the greater in that at times he seemed almost halted with astonishment at what he found on the page. In that sequestered group of village children and their fumbling amateur teachers

Mr. Cooper's regular presence and practice and his air of absolute fidelity created for me an unearthly and yet absorbing trance. Not that I experienced, as they say, religion—no, it was more particular than that, always. I was enchanted specifically by that patriarchal figure in his superintending and Sabbath phase, and in those hours although I knew him by name and in a local habitation near town, I could easily have imagined he had tended flocks in Abraham's vicinity or had looked over Moses' shoulder with a colleague's interest in what he had brought down from the mountain on those stone tablets.

After that year, however, I did not sit in Mr. Cooper's Sunday school again, nor in that church. When my parents returned from South America we moved to the West Coast, and while my father had often dropped in on his elder sister when business took him to the Middle West, I never saw my Aunt Letty again during the time I was in high school and college, nor did I write to her except perfunctory notes now and then at my mother's insistence. When I went to the army, though, Aunt Letty took occasion to look after me again, following me up steadily with cookies and homemade candies, and with highly lugubrious letters of encouragement. So when I was driving through to the East about a year after my discharge from the hospital, I knew I must stop and visit her. It was only partly out of dutifulness; I really wanted to see the old dear. Besides, I had a dim notion of recapturing, possibly, some private lingering essence of that episode in my boyhood. I knew it was quixotic, as such quests always are, but I persisted in the mood, as people often do. That afternoon when I came driving over the hill into the well-remembered panorama of valley, village, and river, I felt a mild excitement, not exactly hoping to rediscover a fountain of youth nor expecting to drop a single melancholy tear over lost innocence, but vaguely imagining that at least I had escaped the present and the immediate past for a while, escaped into something simpler and less equivocal.

Aunt Letty's reception of me helped prolong that romantic notion. She was quite gray and more ample than I had remembered her, but she seemed maidenly still, with a sort of conservative refinement. I suppose what I felt was the moral flowering of her so regularized and respectable feminine existence, that day-to-day life of immaculate housekeeping, zestful cookery, minute frugalities as to oddments and leftovers, regular church attendance, and the dispensing of hot dishes to the sick

and afflicted, all enacted in a conscientiously old-fashioned style of dress, and elevated by custom into a complacently stern code. Coming in, I noted that the house had been painted recently, but the same old buff shade, and the shutters the same chocolate brown. The same furniture stood in exactly the same places, and carried its usual high polish. My old room, to which she led me at once, was familiar in every detail, though of course it had shrunk. She remembered that in my former being I had favored pork chops and apple pie, and for supper she performed them fortissimo. We sat long at table and talked; then I made her let me wipe the dishes while we talked some more. She questioned me so systematically that I perceived she was trying to shape up an outline of my life since I had left her, so that we could proceed on a firm basis, even if only for the day or two of my visit. If it was a part of her thoroughness, it was also her active sympathy, her real kindliness. For me it almost created a strange illusion of security.

I finally remembered and mentioned that I should mail a couple of letters. She looked at the clock and called it long past her bedtime anyway, gave me the key to the front door, and kissed me good night. I drove down to the post office, feeling somehow adventurous to be out on those streets so long after dark. Then when I'd posted my letters, I decided I'd have a drink before I retired. I stopped at the tavern on the town's main corner, where it said Beeler's in large fluent letters on both wide windows. The place was fairly crowded; a gaudily illuminated juke-box was going loud; the air was layered with tobacco smoke. I found an empty stool at the bar and got a highball. While I sipped it I looked around. The patrons were a miscellaneous lot; this evidently was the town club. There were a number of noisy young bucks probably not long out of high school, a few with girls their age, but more of them stagging it. They milled around the place as restless as minnows, or clamored pretentiously over the three pinball machines. On my left at the bar sat two middle-aged men with the seedy look of steady drinkers. Around a table near the front window, under a glaring drop light, five men with the air of regulars sat playing sheephead, attended by two brotherly kibitzers. There were several couples of about my age, some at the bar and others in the booths along the opposite wall; these I took to be married folk; they drank their beer slowly, and mostly stared in apathetic silence, seeming as fated to aimlessness as chips bobbing in a

shallow eddy. Around the curve at the end of the bar sat a girl who looked well along in her twenties; the first time I glanced her way she gave me a definite eye. Beeler's had everything, I reflected. It had all the advertised brands and "Civilization" on the juke-box and spittoons and everything. I felt it odd that this should coexist in the same town with my aunt. I supposed she knew nothing about Beeler's except that it was a place where, regrettably, people drank. Had my forthright Aunt Letty known everything about the joint that I found at a glance, she doubtless, I mused, would have taken her broom to it—not her best broom, of course, but the one she swept the sidewalk with.

And then I was startled to see that one upon whom her broom would impinge was, incredibly, the man who years ago had been my Sunday school superintendent. Yes, it was our Mr. Cooper, for sure, older, white-haired now and a little stooped, but still sturdy and ruddy-faced, and with an even more benevolent twinkle in his eye. He must have been at the bar out of my view further along the line, but now he stood next to the juke-box, with his left elbow propped on it and a glass in his right hand. He was watching the young ones dance, and he looked as benign as if he were about to announce a hymn. What he was waiting for, it turned out, was to put some more coins into the juke-box, so they could go on with the dance. I knew I couldn't pass up speaking to him, hesitant as I felt, so I took my glass and walked over. He watched me as I came.

"Good evening, sir," I said, "aren't you Mr. Cooper, Mr. Joe Cooper?"

"Why, yes, I am," he answered, looking me steadily in the eye, the way I remembered he always did. "But I don't believe I have had the pleasure of your acquaintance, young man."

I told him my name. He inclined a better ear toward me and asked for it again; then he studied the floor and shook his head, in an old man's resigned acknowledgment that memory fails him. I thought maybe he was stalling, trying to brush me off, but I knew it was more likely that anyone who hadn't seen me since I was thirteen wouldn't know me now. So I mentioned my aunt and my living with her for a year when I was a boy. Then all at once he smiled broadly and thrust out his big calloused hand, repeating my name warmly this time. We shook hands heartily, smiling at each other. Then he dropped his hand and gave me another straight look, quite serious now.

"I'm not superintendent of the Sunday school any more," he told me.

It was like him, I reflected, to want the record kept straight. I could see that he felt a bit awkward, though, at our sudden confrontation under such changed terms, and I was sorry to be making him uneasy. But there seemed a ready way to cut the knot; I asked him if he wouldn't have a drink with me.

"Why, thank you, my boy," he said genially, "I will, with pleasure."

He tipped up his glass and emptied its last drops, not greedily it seemed as in some, but frugally, and we stepped over to the bar together. He wanted rye and water. When we were served, I lifted my drink to him and he reached out his glass in his gnarled fist and gently clinked with me. His gesture seemed courteous, convivial, and homely; all at once. As we took our first taste I marveled at him, but I wondered what more we might find to say to one another. However, he seemed completely untroubled now. He put his back to the bar and leaned against it, comfortably sipping his drink and observing the crowd. Then he turned to me, smiling, yet as if about to confide earnestly.

"I'll tell you, my boy," he said, "I never knew there was so much fun in the world."

I don't know what I'd have said to that, but just then a young blonde erupted out of the door marked *Queens,* ran an eye around the room until she located the old man, gave me a quick sober appraisal, and came across the floor toward us. Joe Cooper saw her coming and stood up straighter. He introduced me to the girl, as deliberate and casual as you could ask for. She was pleased to meet me, she said, and she was much obliged to have a drink with us. She looked like a sturdy farm girl, still essentially naive, but it seemed there was something urgent in her too, something almost desperate, covered over with an affectation of nonchalance as obvious as her lipstick. As she turned to stare across the room, old Cooper leaned his head toward me.

"You know, my wife died," he whispered. "Yes, over four years ago."

The girl was turning back toward us, so the only reply I could make to him was to raise my eyebrows and shake my head in commiseration. He began explaining to the girl that he had known me when I was a boy, when I lived here in town for a while, with my aunt.

I was estimating that when I was in the local eighth grade and Sunday school, this blonde chick probably hadn't even been born yet. She was smoothing out the part in old man Cooper's white hair with an affectionate and proprietary touch; then she linked her arm in his and leaned her body against him as she looked over at me.

"I'll tell you what, mister," she said, "Joe is okay. He's all right. He's all for fun. He may not be the Sunday school superintendent any more, but I'll tell you what, he's a square guy."

I told her I was sure he was, he always had been and he always would be; and he looked pleased but sheepish; and then there we stood for a moment, completely becalmed. So, I thought to myself, get going, fast. I bowed and told the girl it had been a pleasure, and she said likewise. I shook hands with him again and without any feigning told him I was glad to have seen him again, and he answered in kind; and I said "Good luck!"—that's what I said to him that night—and he wished me the same. As I drove back to my aunt's house along the empty silent streets, past the dark houses where respectably retired villagers slept in concord, I tried to take in that altered image of old Joe Cooper; and I wondered especially how his belated fling had begun, whether by a drastic and possibly cynical revolt, which I could scarcely believe, or whether in a prolonged drift, once his wife's death had loosed his moorings, had emptied so many lifelong habits of their meaning. I went to sleep still pondering about him, and about what might become of him finally.

If the accident hadn't taken him that night, I might have told my aunt I'd seen him. Next morning, though, when she returned from the phone with the news, I felt it was not for me to say anything. I didn't think I understood him better than his townsmen did; I only saw him differently, in a way I couldn't explain to myself even, much less to those who beheld a desperate varicose debauchery in what seemed to me only an unseasonable folly peculiarly still with an invincible boyishness. Above all, I couldn't have told my aunt how old Joe Cooper had said he had never known there was so much fun in the world; the notion of such awful impenitence, and on the night of his death, would have shocked her, would have choked her as with sulphurous fumes from the flaming pit itself. So when Aunt Letty came back from her second round of telephoning for still another cup

of coffee, I just listened while she earnestly told me more. By his daughters' request the funeral would be tomorrow afternoon, at two o'clock, at the church, with a mixed quartet but no sermon. The idea, I suppose, was to preserve custom yet say as little as possible about the disgracefully deceased and to put him away quickly, as if they could at once and forever cover up his history along with him. I guessed too they wanted to get in first, to avoid the possible embarrassment of doubling up at the cemetery with the girl's funeral.

My dear aunt was vexing herself with practical details; she must send a floral offering, she said, out of respect to the daughters at least. I suggested I join her in sending the flowers, though I didn't add out of respect to what, whether the bereaved relieved daughters, or the mystery of death, or the greater enigma we seldom look at so considerингly as in retrospect. I proposed too that my aunt and I drive in that morning to the nearby city and have lunch wherever she liked and then get some very nice flowers. It took her a moment to convince herself that just because she'd already planned a noon meal for me, she didn't necessarily have to cook it, but then she was delighted, not only at the prospect of our jaunt together, but, I could see, in anticipation of the prestige a city-bought floral piece would command. And when I told her I wouldn't leave the following noon, as I had planned, but would stay and go to the funeral with her, she was further gratified. Now with me to take her in my car, she exclaimed, she could go to the cemetery too, and besides she'd be proud to have me along with her.

So it happened that I sat once more with my aunt in the little church where I had not expected to come again. I saw the sunlight, again made dreary by the plain saffron-tinted diamond-paned windows, falling as ever upon the further faded angel with annunciatory trumpet painted on the wall behind the pulpit—the rather buxom angel in seemingly precarious levitation as of a swan dive going wrong. The church was crowded full. Old Joe Cooper's coffin at the front was loaded and flanked with what my aunt now whispered of as the floral tributes, among which ours was gratifyingly conspicuous. All the special amenities were observed decently and in order. The mixed quartet sang some of the old hymns in the old, tired tempo. The pastor, a thick and inept man I had not seen before, read St. Paul's ambitious argument, how that this corruptible shall be raised incorruptible, in a

labored tone. Then more simply he presented the obituary, with its sparse dates: Joseph Cooper's birth upon the homestead farm, where he was to live and prosper most of his life; his confirmation in the church of his fathers; his retirement to the village; the grievous loss of his good and faithful wife; the completion of his thirty-seven years of service as Sunday school superintendent; and the year, month, and day of his death. But not of course its unspeakably regrettable hour and other circumstances. And nothing about how he had behaved no worse than many another man, though he had done things in such a scandalously reversed sequence. I sensed in that congregation a tenseness as if they were watching a skater on thin ice while this tale was told of years brought to an end, as the burial psalm put it.

In the cemetery on the hillside at the edge of the village everyone seemed a bit easier, perhaps just because they were out of doors in clear sunshine and the sight of leafy trees and country fields. The doings there were simpler too, but still quite patterned, down to the official supererogatory casting of earth into the place where they had just laid him beside his wife. I wished then that something else might be said of him, openly and in the presence of all—a word perhaps respecting what had been erased from that white head brought down so deviously—all a farmer's patient lore of seasons, and meditated Bible verses, and long remembrance of his young love for his one wife. I felt also what they from that little church probably would not choose to dwell upon, how the onset of an endless silence had healed that whimsical unrest of his latter spring, had utterly cured his awkward grasping after pleasure in semblances he had never known until he was so old that he was peculiarly disgraced among the staid. In his consummate and finally remedial repose wasn't there a kind of absolution, too, I wondered, not only for him but available for any who might have withheld compassion or some least acknowledgment of the pity of life? However, it was not for me, the sojourner there, to comment. So no more was said, and it seemed there was no one to say anything more, until my aunt glanced back from our car at the dispersing people, sighed, and murmured that after all there were some things it was not for us to judge.

GERMAN WRITERS AND WRITING TODAY

By JOACHIM JOESTEN

A BAVARIAN WRITER of some merit recently found himself evicted from his comparatively luxurious apartment by a writ of the Munich Housing Agency (*Wohnungsamt*). In an indignant letter of protest to that agency, the homeless author pointed out that in his opinion the post-Hitler State had a moral obligation to foster, rather than hamper, literary and artistic endeavors.

The official in charge of the case did not take issue with this point. In his reply he merely observed, "Inasmuch as it is an established fact that many artists have produced immortal works in damp and musty attics, it is the considered opinion of this agency that a study equipped with all modern conveniences ought not to be regarded as an indispensable prerequisite for creative achievement."

Commenting upon this Solomonic pronouncement, the newspaper *Die Neue Zeitung* remarked, "Now at last we understand why German poets, painters and composers have been so little productive since the end of the war—they have been living too well." The editor, spinning out his sarcasm, suggested a new policy of weaning the pampered intelligentsia from its luxury-loving habits: Since Schubert had done some of his best composing dressed in a pair of ragged pants, why not stimulate the production of music by depriving composers of their clothing coupons? If Grabbe was once able to write his "Hannibal" in the wavering light of one candle, then obviously there is no need to allocate electric bulbs to our dramatists. And what about Gandhi? Didn't his mind always work at its best while he was fasting? What, then, do philosophers of Germany need bread rations for?

An emigré from Germany, JOACHIM JOESTEN has lived in this country since 1941. A one-time foreign correspondent, he is now a free-lance journalist. His most recent book was *Germany: What Now?* (Ziff-Davis, 1948).

So the secret of the "empty bureau drawers" could now be explained. Ever since the end of the war the world has been wondering when the epoch-making works supposedly written in secret by anti-Nazi authors during the twelve unholy years would finally burst into print. Nothing sensational happened, and when somebody lightly suggested that perhaps the bureau drawers were empty, the phrase quickly caught on. But now it could be told, according to the article, that those drawers weren't so empty after all. They were stuffed to the brim with succulent hams, fat Edam cheeses, and strings of tasty sausages. There was no room left for manuscripts.

Enough of the fantasy. If the bureau drawers were empty, the simple fact of the matter is that under a hundred per cent effective totalitarian dictatorship, such as Hitler was able to set up, no privacy of any kind existed. In the face of the all-ensnaring network of snoopers and informers organized by the Gestapo, any author foolhardy enough to hide a manuscript hostile to the regime in his desk would simply have asked for the noose or the concentration camp. Quite a few did, too. The more prudent ones put their unwritten manuscripts away in their mental storerooms. This process, while safer, naturally increased the time lag and some of the books that eventually sprang, or will spring, from it may not reach the printing presses until a few years hence.

As to the material conditions of authorship in present-day Germany, they certainly are not conducive to the conception, and still less to the completion, of masterpieces. While it may be debatable whether or not a full belly is an asset in writing, most writers and indeed most creative intellects seem to need certain stimulants or sedatives such as coffee, tea, or tobacco—all of which are virtually unobtainable in Germany today, except at exorbitant black market prices. Moreover, an acute shortage of paper, typewriters, books, lighting equipment, and what not often reduces the writing profession to primitive working conditions.

The innumerable hardships and privations under which German intellectuals are laboring today have produced at least two far-reaching effects, neither of which appears desirable from the viewpoint of one who wishes for a liberal renaissance in postwar Germany: communist influences have gained the upper hand among the half-starved intelligentsia, especially in Berlin, and of course in the eastern zone; and

there are signs of an incipient "hunger emigration," which threatens to drain Germany of much of its best talent.

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It may shock American intellectuals, but the truth is that a majority of German writers and artists today—especially in the "big name" class—either belong to, or are influenced by, communist-front organizations. Among these, the *Kulturbund,* or as fully translated the "Cultural League for the Democratic Renovation of Germany," plays a leading role. It is without question the most important—numerically as well as in terms of political and cultural influence—association of German intellectuals existing today. The organization claims a membership of 120,000—principally writers, artists, teachers, students, and scientists. Although it functions to all practical purposes only in Berlin and in the Soviet zone, it exercises considerable influence also in the western zones.

The *Kulturbund* was first organized in Soviet-occupied Berlin in June, 1945—that is before the city was placed under four-power control. From its incipience, the league was dominated by Communist party liners or fellow travelers—the writers Johannes R. Becher, Erich Weinert, Willi Bredel, Friedrich Wolf, Theodor Plievier; the political bosses Anton Ackermann, Otto Winzer, Paul Wandel and others—although it professed to be nonpartisan and nonpolitical.

Subsequently, it is true, the *Kulturbund* broadened its base and cloaked its character through a generous admixture of liberal and even conservative elements. To name only a few of the most important: Ernst Lemmer and Ferdinand Friedensburg of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU); Heinrich Mertens of the Liberal Democratic party (LDP); Dr. Johannes Stroux, Rector of Berlin University; Bernard Kellermann, the author; the prominent painters Karl Hofer and Max Pechstein; the sculptress Renée Sintenis and many others.

The most famous of contemporary German writers (outside of the emigration), Ernst Wiechert, also is linked to the *Kulturbund,* despite his conservative leanings. While Wiechert's name does not appear on the ordinary pronouncements of the *Kulturbund,* he has been for more than two years a contributing editor of *Aufbau,* a monthly review

published by the league. Ricarda Huch (who last November died at the age of 83) was a member of the Thuringian section of the *Kulturbund.*

After having thus admitted into its ranks a liberal contingent of noncommunist representatives, the *Kulturbund* late in 1946 reinforced its party-line cadres with a sizable number of prominent remigrants from Mexico. The group included the internationally-known authors Anna Seghers and Ludwig Renn, the latter, author of the famous *War* and *After War,* both translated into English, as well as the political publicists Alexander Abusch and Paul Merker. All of them are now in the forefront of *Kulturbund* activities. Abusch and Miss Seghers are members of the league's executive council, the "Praesidialrat." (President of the *Kulturbund* is the communist poet Johannes R. Becher.) Renn heads the regional organization in Saxony.

Out of the thirty-one members of the executive council of the *Kulturbund,* including the president, at least eight are members of the Communist party (now doing business as the Socialist Unity party or SED) and at least as many are fellow travelers. Outspoken noncommunists or anticommunists, such as Lemmer, Friedensburg, and Martens, are decidedly in a minority.

Thus the contention of the American and British military governments that the *Kulturbund* is a communist-front organization is undoubtedly justified. Anyone familiar with the league's two official publications, the monthly review *Aufbau,* and the weekly *Sonntag,* will arrive at the same conclusion. Nevertheless, the wisdom of the Western Allies' decision to ban the *Kulturbund* in their sectors of Berlin, as of last November, would seem to be open to question. Such strong-arm methods usually do more harm than good, quite apart from the fact that the league definitely has been a factor of prime importance in the revival of literary and cultural activities in postwar Germany.

The incontestable prevalence of communistic influences in the intellectual life of Germany today is not only a matter of ideology and political organization. It is also in considerable measure a result of the Soviet Military Government's keen interest in, and support of, the German intelligentsia, which has no counterpart in the western zones.

In this connection, a quotation from an article published last November in the Hamburg newspaper *Die Welt,* organ of the British Military Government, may be of interest. The author of the article, Pro-

fessor Walter Hagemann, after pointing out that teachers and other intellectuals in Western Germany are "practically sentenced to death by starvation," unless they are able to supplement their meager incomes and food rations through extracurricular activities, wrote:

> Nobody in the western zones seems to have taken notice of the fact that the Soviet Military Administration from the start included the intellectuals among the workers receiving the highest food rations. . . . Thousands of intellectuals thus were enabled to pursue their occupations without being constantly beset by grave economic problems. By contrast, in the western zones, nobody bothered to correct the Nazi view of "heavy labor" as a purely physical activity and to class the intellectual workers, who often are also subjected to great physical stress, with the preferred group of "heavy laborers."

By giving writers, artists, and scholars of all kinds preferred treatment in the matter of food rations, housing, clothing coupons and so forth, the Soviet Military Administration has won over to its side a great number of German intellectuals who were either opposed to communism or politically disinterested. What is more, the Russians from the first pursued a deliberate policy of attracting toward their zone German intellectuals whom the Nazi regime had scattered to the four corners of the earth. Immediately after the fall of Berlin, in May, 1945, virtually the entire German writers' colony in Moscow—Becher, Wolf, Weinert, Bredel, Plievier, and others—returned home in a body.

A year later, as was mentioned above, a similar mass remigration from Mexico took place. In this instance, official Soviet support of the move went so far as to dispatch a Russian freighter specially to a Mexican port for the purpose of bringing the German exiles back home.

From the United States, Britain, France, Sweden, and other countries, scores of other, more or less prominent refugee intellectuals followed the call and returned to the eastern zone of Germany, or Berlin. By contrast, those who by origin or predilection could have been expected to head for the western zones mostly stayed put where they were—in Hollywood, New York, London—and the American and British authorities hampered rather than encouraged occasional attempts to get back by democratically-minded German intellectuals.

Thus the policies of the Western Powers and of Russia have been poles apart in this matter and it is no wonder that the balance of cultural influence in Germany is leaning heavily toward the Soviet side.

It is true, however, that, at least in some instances, the aspiration for greater personal and intellectual freedom prevailed over the better living conditions offered in the eastern zone. The outstanding case of this kind has been that of Theodor Plievier, author of *The Kaiser Goes: the Generals Remain,* published in America in 1933. After having for years worshipped at Soviet altars, he suddenly turned up in the American zone last September. (A few weeks later, the New York publishing firm of Appleton-Century announced that they had signed a contract with Plievier for the publication of his novel *Stalingrad,* leading best seller in postwar Germany.)

Plievier's westward hegira, which followed upon a similar exodus of several prominent eastern zone politicians, including the above-mentioned Heinrich Mertens, naturally gave rise to much speculation. It was generally interpreted as a break with communism and some reports had it that the novelist would make some pretty sensational disclosures when the time came.

In the face of these rumors, Plievier, in a statement published last November in the Munich weekly *Echo der Woche,* declared that he had never been a Communist and had never adhered to totalitarianism in any form; that, on the other hand, he would not let himself be "pressed into the strait jacket of a sterile anti-Sovietism." He added that he had gone West because "I like the Western atmosphere, in which I grew up and which I breathed until 1934, and because I want to live not behind the curtain, but in front of it—in a country with open doors to the outside world."

A second, and potentially perhaps even more serious consequence of the unsatisfactory living conditions under which the German intelligentsia has labored for the past three years is the widespread tendency among writers, artists, actors, teachers, and others to grasp the first opportunity to "get away from it all." Thus a second German emigration, from the oppressive rule not of a new Hitler but of Hunger has been under way for some time.

Switzerland, in particular, is a magnet that attracts a growing number of German intellectuals with seemingly irresistible force. The combination of natural beauty, traditional freedom and forever well-filled fleshpots is something even great minds find it hard to withstand.

A case in point is that of Karl Jaspers, the famous Heidelberg philosopher, one of the fathers of existentialism. A few months ago, Professor Jaspers accepted a call to the university of Basel, Switzerland. American newspapers, including the *New York Times,* carried dispatches which attributed Jaspers' resignation from his Heidelberg chair to political differences; it was alleged that the great scholar and author had given up his fight for a democratic Germany in bitter disappointment. Such a disappointment would be perfectly understandable, the way things have been going in Germany lately, but it was not the motive. In a letter to *Die Welt,* Jaspers frankly admitted that what attracted him to Basel, besides greater facilities for study, was the hope to find better material conditions and rest to which he and his wife, "both aged and ailing," felt themselves entitled. Nobody will want to blame Professor Jaspers for his escape into the Swiss paradise, but it is obvious that if the trend continues, Germany eventually will be bled white of its talent and knowledge.

For the trend apparently is continuing. Scores of prominent writers, like Wiechert, Weinert, Gertrud von Le Fort, Ernst Kreuger, Oda Schaefer, Horst Lange; actors like Gustav Knuth, Kaethe Gold, and Kaethe Dorsch; and many other representatives of the German intelligentsia have recently accepted invitations to Switzerland and stayed for more or less prolonged periods. Several of them have let it be known that they would remain abroad indefinitely if the proper arrangements could be made. In June, Wiechert left Germany for good to live at Kuessnacht, Switzerland.

III

As yet no clearly defined literary and artistic mode—such as the expressionist movement after the first World War—has emerged in Germany, nor anywhere else for that matter. However, a number of more or less marked trends are discernible.

In fiction, there is a definite tendency toward escapist forms of writing—romance (not in the popular American sense, but as a translation of the German word "Romantik"), mysticism, esoteric narrative, adventure, and fantasy. Authors, publishers, and booksellers agree that the public does not want to read anything too closely connected with

the present and the recent past. In particular, it shies away from works of fiction with a political or economic background.

It should not be inferred from this statement, however, that books of this type cannot be sold in Germany. Every product of the printing presses nowadays sells in that country, regardless of subject matter, treatment, quality, or the author's name. This is simply another manifestation of the general desire for goods of any type or kind in which to invest a surplus of uncertain currency. Books, like every other commodity are hoarded in Germany today, not always to be read, but to be resold or bartered on the black market.

This abnormal state of affairs naturally does not tend to improve the quality of writing, since authors do not have to worry about sales figures. They know that the size of every edition is determined not by the demand but by the paper allocation quota (which runs to around 5,000 copies in the American zone, somewhat more in the Russian, somewhat less in the British and the French) and that every book is practically sold out even before publication.

Peter Suhrkamp, a leading Berlin publisher, recently summed up this situation in the remark: "If I were to pick letters at random from a case of type and had this galimatias printed, bound and placed on sale, I feel sure I could sell the entire stock in a matter of days. What is more, I would not get even a single return."

It is not the sales viewpoint, therefore, which determines what is written and printed, but publishers nevertheless strive to give the public what it wants, in Germany as elsewhere. And the public wants escapist fiction.

It also wants religion, lots and lots of it. It is not by chance that a deeply religious writer, Reinhold Schneider, appears as the most widely published author in Germany today. In a recent catalogue, which presented the first fairly complete survey of German postwar literature (it was published on the occasion of the Berlin book exhibition of June, 1947), Schneider was listed as the author of no less than thirty-two current titles.

Religious motives also dominate or pervade most of the outstanding works of fiction that have appeared in the past three years, in particular: Elisabeth Langgaesser's *Das Unausloeschliche Siegel* (The Indelible Seal); Ernst Hardt's *Don Hjalmar;* Hermann Kasack's *Die Stadt hin-*

ter dem Strom (The City Beyond the River); and Editha Klipstein's *Bekanntschaft mit dem Tode* (Acquaintance with Death).

There is a conspicuous Heine renaissance. German publishers in all zones have brought out new editions of the works of the great Jewish poet who was more truly German than Bismarck and Hitler and all the other Nazis and nationalists put together. Nietzsche, on the other hand, has fallen on bad days. Of eight recently published books about him, all but one—this one written by Jaspers—assail him as a precursor of nazism.

Surrealism has made its first appearance in German letters, especially in *Die Gesellschaft vom Dachboden* (The Attic Company) by Ernst Kreuder, who is one of the most promising among the young authors, and in *Der Schwarze Engel* (The Black Angel) by Gertrud Dahlmann-Stolzenbach.

So far, German literature since the surrender has lived in a world all its own, screened and secluded from the outside. The country is only just beginning to receive some of the literary and cultural impulses current in the world during the period, 1933-1945. By the same token, very little of what has been written and published in Germany in the past three years has yet been heard of, much less read in translation, abroad. Here is a field which enterprising American publishers might find worth looking into.

WE NOTE . . .

HENRY WALLACE AND HIS FOLLOWERS

Dwight Macdonald remarks that in some ways Henry Wallace is "an attractive and even admirable person—but . . . his virtues, since they are invariably negated by his approach to politics, only make him a more dangerous figure." This is one of the better statements in a book[1] which is at once the best source on the personal history of the Progressive Party's chief candidate and a work whose furthest conclusions are somewhat exaggerated. In the course of his examination Macdonald tries to show that Wallace is an imperialist; a man of enormous but frustrated ambition; a word-monger not to say a demagogue; a political coward (when it comes to close quarters); a comet pulled by natural gravitation toward the sun of the Soviet Union; a "corn-fed mystic"; and a man divided against himself. He offers factual evidence to back up these allegations but he also goes so far as to argue that many of Wallace's words and actions resemble Hitler's. The seeker after truth should probably search Macdonald's book as carefully as he would a Wallace speech; he will be much better rewarded, but the process will not be dissimilar.

One of Wallace's political attributes is his enormous good will. As Macdonald puts it, Wallace appears to most of his followers as the "embodiment of a mood . . .—a mood which . . . accepts Wallace on his own valuation as a lover of peace who is trying to find a way to avoid World War III." The trouble is that Wallace's good will is not only global; it is also without discrimination or focus. In practice he reflects too easily those men who at the moment surround him—a political habit which does his long-run reputation for integrity little good. When a Madison Square Garden audience (September 12, 1946) booed his first critical remarks of the Soviet Union he dropped all others from his prepared speech. No praise for British labor (and particularly its left wing) was too good for it when Wallace was wooing it in England last winter but since that time he has not given the Labor Party a tumble except to include it by implication in his periodic philippics against British imperialism. During his campaign for the Presidency he has obviously been troubled by continued charges of Communist influence and control in the Progressive Party, but in his several references to the question he has never squarely faced it; nor will he so long as he is surrounded by men an important part of whose job is to keep him satisfied that he is doing the right thing.

Wallace's political uncertainty is at its worst in informal public meetings and in conferences with newspapermen. His followers are bitter over the bad press he has received, but much of the fault lies in his own unbuttoned speech. No one can seriously contend that news of his cause has been suppressed; if anything it has received more space than it deserved. And the daily press,

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[1] *Henry Wallace: the Man and the Myth*. By Dwight Macdonald. Vanguard. $2.50

whatever its faults, cannot be geared to a commentary or correction on every "misstatement," especially when they come a half dozen to a speech or interview. Last spring not long after Wallace had loosed one of his blasts about the unreliability of the American press, Senator Robert Taft became incensed because he and his fellow-conservatives were being constantly misrepresented in the daily news. Something is present in these controversies besides ideological obtuseness or political differences. Dealing with the press requires technique. Wallace presumably learned something of that technique in his years as a Washington administrator. But today his problem is far more difficult. Now he is running for public office and talking, not departmental policy under the direction of Roosevelt, but politics on his own. Whatever technique he once learned is now no match for his own lack of forthrightness and his looseness of tongue.

Wallaceites are frequently incensed at the charge that their candidate is an "impractical idealist." In the sense that some people apply the term to Wallace, it seems wide of the mark. He is a successful businessman and he was accounted a reasonably good administrator in the federal government. But if Henry knows how to meet a payroll, his idea of good political strategy seems more calculated to shoot the moon than to accomplish the objectives he has set for himself. Consider some of the turns he has taken along his quixotic political path:

1. Letting the Communists have so strong a hand in the Progressive Party has split labor, and in the split the Progressives have received much the shorter end of the stick. The split took place chiefly in the CIO where entrenched Communists demanded open opposition to the European Recovery Program—a demand which they were generally and pointedly refused. In the long run cleaning the Communists out of the leadership in the CIO will be excellent for the American labor movement; Mr. Wallace might be backhandedly congratulated for his assist to honest non-communist labor leaders on this accomplishment, but in the process he has lost a large part of the labor vote, which once upon a time he stood an excellent chance to win.

2. From the time Wallace as Secretary of Commerce attempted to split American foreign policy in his Madison Square Garden speech in September, 1946,[2] he has more and more accepted the role of American agent for Russian foreign policy. This appears in his false charge that Ambassador Steinhardt had fomented the Czechoslovakian crisis (Steinhardt had not been in Czechoslovakia for weeks preceding the event), in his open letter to Stalin of last May 11, and in the tone and words of his more recent speeches. This role of foreign agent in America is probably Wallace's worst mistake in strategy. Not that this repeated by-play will be misunderstood by any great number of Americans. But it is misunderstood by the Russians, and the further it goes, the more it will be misunderstood by them. To the Kremlin the Wallace remarks mean only that America is divided, and that if Russian tactics in the cold war are stepped up a bit, then maybe America can be frozen out.

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[2]According to Vincent Sheean, Molotov remarked to Jan Masaryk in Paris the next day, "Well, you see what has happened. The American people are revolting against their reactionary foreign policy."

That the stepping up of the cold war would unify America (Wallace himself has said that in case of war he would quit his campaign), that the great majority of any vote for Wallace will not be communist or treasonable, this the Russian leaders do not know. It is perhaps ironic that with every bit of "success" in his war of words over American foreign policy, Wallace increases the risk of real war with Russia.

3. When Wallace went with the Progressive Citizens of America and most other New Dealers sided with Americans for Democratic Action, the split in liberal ranks became obvious. Yet it was not a serious break until Wallace took the initiative in forming the Progressive Party. He maintained that the two older parties were the same, yet every action he took lent aid to the Republicans. Progressive leaders have contended with a straight face that they would not run their own candidates but would support liberal Democratic candidates for Congress wherever they found them. But on September 20, Wallace finally admitted the fact, that Progressives would run candidates wherever they could—against the liberal Democrat Paul Douglas in Illinois,[3] against the liberal Hubert Humphrey in Minnesota, against the liberal Helen Gahagan and more than 75 others. The coming Congress will almost certainly be a poorer one because of Progressive competition.

4. Wallace has not taken care to insist and prove that his foreign policy will lead to one world though he has talked as though it would. His policy wherever it has become specific (and it has too frequently been vague) points to two worlds rather than to one. And this, of course, is a serious error in strategy if he intends to make American foreign policy more conducive to international agreement. Here again he seems to be talking for Soviet Russia rather than world-wide peace. (I shall say more about this later.)

Former friends of Wallace have argued that he has made his political decisions out of pique at Harry Truman and frustration at not being recognized as Roosevelt's political heir, but such an explanation hardly makes the decisions appear more sensible. Nothing makes him appear more a victim of his own emotions than his political "strategy."

What are the campaign issues as Wallace sees them? On the domestic front they are not greatly different from those of the Democrats—lower prices, repeal of the Taft-Hartley law, civil liberties, aid to education, and greater security. Wallace would eliminate "Wall Street" and the military from control of the government but he offers no method to accomplish this except his own campaign propaganda; and as I have already noted, the competition of his own fellow Progressives for seats in Congress seems designed to produce exactly the wrong kind of national legislature to accomplish liberal purposes of any kind.

The international issues are something else. One must include here his opposition to the draft and universal military training, for they are all part of his program to disarm America in the face of Russian aggression. The key to his foreign program, however, has been his opposition to the European Recovery Program. Here again his role

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[3]This means help at the polls to the reactionary Republican Senator Curly Brooks, whose record Wallace has affected not to know about though he presided as Vice President over the Senate at a time when Brooks was a member.

as a great humanitarian would seem to dictate that he support such an enterprise if only to rescue Europeans as soon as possible from starvation and want. And indeed, he did initially favor it. But when the Russians and the Communists turned against it, then he took his cue and opposed it.

His first argument against ERP attacked our aid as political interference in places where we didn't belong. But in his acceptance speech he argued from more homely grounds: "The American people want and deserve fewer red issues and more red meat." The line has overtones that are isolationist and the opposite of idealistic, but it has been plugged again and again with variations in later speeches. And in his campaign book[4] he says that we shall have to get out of Asia and Europe in a few years anyway because our policies will have failed and our "help" will have become too burdensome—so why not now before it's too late? At this point his argument is confusingly similar to that of Ernest Weir, Virgil Jordan of the National Industrial Conference Board, and Merwin K. Hart, all distinguished reactionaries,[5] who testified before a Congressional committee that ERP would bleed America white.[6]

On another level of thinking Wallace is not at all disturbed about sending vast amounts of American help to Europe. Earlier he would have given grants and loans outright. Today he would accomplish all through the United Nations. He is willing to risk a stalemate with Russia over disposal of the assistance through the UN (provided it first could be passed through Congress) and the consequent disillusion about all international aid which would naturally follow prolonged frustration. From this and other Wallace foreign "policies" I gather an impression that he would not be displeased to see the general American temper and public opinion on foreign affairs return to what it was in the period, 1921-1941.

Soviet Russia is the stumbling block, of course, and on that subject he has become as voluble as any anticommunist. He wants "peace" and he is sure that satisfactory terms can be negotiated with Russia. How would he accomplish this feat? Aside from his belief in his own special ability to handle the job ("If I were President, there would be no crisis in Berlin"[7]), he has offered only two brief clews on the subject. But they are significant. In his speech of September, 1946, he said of agreement between the United States and Russia, "On our part we should recognize that we have no more busi-

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[4]*Toward World Peace*. Harcourt, Brace. $1.75.

[5]Such a satirical term is actually too good for Hart. His latest communication, in a bulletin of the National Economic Council, is an appeal to assist Franco Spain and reinvigorate America First.

[6]Some of Wallace's cohorts have carried this line of thought to its ultimate absurdity: In Louis Adamic's *Trends and Tides* (most recent issue) Leslie B. Bain, for example, argues that ERP is the American Maginot line, that America was sucked into promoting it by Communist resistance at the instigation of the Kremlin, and that it is all preparation for final Soviet victory. The air of defeatism in the article is complete and resembles the Goebbels line before the fall of France.

[7]Wallace's acceptance speech, July 24.

ness in the political affairs of Eastern Europe than Russia has in the political affairs of Latin America, Western Europe, and the United States." He repeats this in his book though his views on ERP would seem to negate the reference to Western Europe. Before the Senate committee on European aid he became somewhat more specific about the shape a Soviet-American pact should take; as a model he proposed the agreement of 1907 by which Russia and Great Britain divided the Near East into their respective spheres of influence. (This too appears in his book.)

Wallace, then, proposes to sit down with Stalin in friendly fashion and divide up the world into respective spheres of influence. (Of course, he also wants to work through the UN but how he would accomplish that job is not clear. In any case, the agreement with Stalin would come first.)

To get the full flavor of his proposal, one should refer back to Wallace's diatribes against Henry Luce's "American Century." Wallace's two-worlds proposal does not really differ from the Luce imperialism except for one factor: While we are pulling the job, we should be nice and pleasant about it and not get into a fight with the Russians over the spoils. This, of course, is not the only part of his foreign program; it isn't well thought out, and it doesn't always agree with other parts; but he has emphasized it over the longest period and it is to be taken with the most seriousness.

One does not have to underwrite American foreign policy of the last two years to disagree with Wallace. Liberals, in fact, will agree with many of the abstract terms of his platform, particularly on certain domestic issues. What they unalterably oppose is his substitution of Communist power for "Wall Street" power, his substitution of the interests of the Kremlin for the best interests of America, and his high-handed and mistaken strategy for bringing about his particular brand of the millenium.

II

A Chicago political writer, Milburn Akers, believes that Wallace is his most natural self when he appeals to college students. Certainly he spares them the worst of his political speeches.[8] If he seems more at home among college students and teachers than among other groups, it may be because of his professorial manner, or because of his

[8]Sample of the depths to which his ghost writers can go—from a labor speech at Bridgeport, Connecticut:

"Labor leadership which works for the bipartisan foreign policy is betraying labor even more certainly than if it walked through a picket line. . . . This kind of leadership means labor's destruction just as certainly as Robert Ley's leadership destroyed organized labor in Nazi Germany.

"Those who fall for the red herring issue are stooges for Taft and Hartley."

Wallace does not name them, but the labor leaders whom he is comparing to Nazis are obviously Philip Murray, Emil Rieve, James Carey, Walter Reuther, and other CIO noncommunists who have refused to endorse him. In another part of this speech, he refers to "misleaders of labor" a term which was once the monopoly of reactionaries.

This sort of thing obviously does not have the authentic Wallace touch. It appears almost daily in *The Daily Worker*—and has appeared more and more frequently in Wallace's statements as his campaign progressed.

scientific and intellectual interests, or because he has an appeal for campus idealists in what appears at first glance to be his own idealism. So far as the students are concerned we must realize that we are dealing here with some of the first postwar liberals, young people whose only previous guide for action was what Roosevelt did and who are only too easily persuaded today that the banner has been picked up from the fallen leader's hand by Wallace. That is not to say that Wallace has a monopoly of campus political interest, or even a majority. But it does call for a brief examination — an examination made simpler at the moment because one of Wallace's most vigorous campus followers, Professor F. O. Matthiessen, who is also one of America's most brilliant literary critics, has exposed his own political heart and soul.[9]

This is something a bit new under the sun. The Professor Matthiessens and their students of a generation or less ago would never have espoused a political cause so publicly or generously, and it is to the credit of the present generation that they have begun to think politically. What is not to their credit, of course, is the immediate result.

In the latter half of 1947 Professor Matthiessen visited Europe lecturing on American literature at Salzburg and Charles University in Prague. His book is a journal of his impressions and ideas during that pilgrimage and they deal as frequently with America as with Europe. Though chaotic and fragmentary, they come from his heart, and he says of his work that "it possesses value only to the extent that it becomes representative also of what others are thinking." It is not unfair, I think, to consider the book from the viewpoint of a political philosophy; Professor Matthiessen clearly means what he says though he has not chosen a form that is systematic.

Doubtless he would resent being called a political dilettante. He has joined the American Federation of Teachers. He has labored for liberal causes around Cambridge, both in and out of Harvard University where he teaches. He is critical of American writers who follow existentialism as a way of escape from social responsibility. He has come to the conclusion that no new political party can get anywhere "unless it is rooted in the labor movement." These would seem to be waystations on the road to political awareness.

Just where does he arrive? One may judge from the following:

1. He doesn't trust Russian Communists or American Communists, but most of the European Communists he meets on his trip impress him favorably. "If I lived in France," he says, "I don't quite see how I could help being a Communist. . . . It's easy to be a sucker for French vitality and gaiety." The truth is, however, that he is personally not "a Marxist in any sense," though his thought has "been influenced by Marx" and though he has "been influenced by the same Protestant revival that had been voiced most forcefully in America by Reinhold Niebuhr." There would seem to be some confusion here, and it is hardly resolved by the rest of the book.

2. Like Henry Wallace, whom he looks upon as a lesser but modern Jefferson, he sees no real conflict between Communists and Social Democrats that should prevent them from working together amicably. He likes best the situation in Czechoslovakia where the

[9] *From the Heart of Europe*. By F. O. Matthiessen. Oxford. $1.75.

two groups collaborate—to the benefit of the Communists. He told a Czech audience that the American Socialists have lost much of their following by giving so much of their time ("in a way the Czech Social Democrats had avoided") to fighting against the Communists instead of for Socialism. He is sure that Czech Communists and those of other countries outside Russia are primarily socialists without any real interest in Russian methods. They do not look upon art and literature in the same way as the Russians do. Of the Russian attitude toward art and literature he completely disapproves.

3. New Dealers who don't like Henry Wallace, he believes, have been persuaded by the capitalist press. Concerning De Gaulle's growing popular support in France, he remarked to one European radical friend, "without Roosevelt to warn against De Gaulle's consuming egomania, the American press would now rally to support him as a bulwark against Communism." He cannot comprehend the case of André Malraux or "the tone and jargon" of Arthur Koestler's more recent journalistic pieces. He has nothing but scorn for "those New York writers whose thought has never been nourished by first-hand participation in social action either at home or abroad."

I am necessarily passing over much in the book that is unexceptionable—descriptions of the European countryside and of his associations with his European students (with whom he apparently established a fine rapport). The impulse I am discussing here is political and one immediately asks why Professor Matthiessen seems so confused.

Underlying his whole attitude abroad I detect an uncritical reverence toward European politics not unlike the reverence American professors of literature once gave to European culture. He also exhibits a lack of experience about certain social realities—which perhaps so far as Europe is concerned is not strange. But this last weakness comes out most clearly when he is talking about American labor. "No progressive party can get anywhere unless it is rooted in the labor movement," he says, and repeats it almost by rote. And so he speculates about "a different type of political leader, a type which the labor movement should now be ripe enough to produce." He first considers Harry Bridges, possibly because he saw the West Coast leader "at closest hand." Bridges is "tough," "entirely fearless," and "quite capable of thinking for himself." But "he is probably too identified with the extreme left . . . to enter directly into politics in the immediate future."

The man who conveys "some of the same impression of strength and dignity of character that Debs did" is William Z. Foster, with whom he also was favorably impressed. "Foster is not a thinker," however, although he "had shared in the main battles of the labor movement and had been forced to radical conclusions."

But the leader who impressed him as the most thoughtful was Vincent Ray Dunne of the Minnesota teamsters' union. Dunne "was devoted to the values of culture, and determined that the working man should share in them." Here was a Trotskyite he could understand, "the nearest America had come to producing a Marxist leader in the selfless tradition of Lenin."

Nowhere does Matthiessen discuss American labor in terms of specific economic ideas. And perhaps his most serious sin of commission is his disparagement of Walter Reuther, which occurs not once but twice. He told the

Czech Workers' Academy in a speech on "Progressive Forces in America Today" that Reuther "was symptomatic of our dilemma," and of "the wavering and instability" in the CIO-PAC. He repeats the old charge of ambition against Reuther without defining his term. (Does he mean a younger leader in the shape of John L. Lewis?) And one wonders, if he is really opposed to ambition, how he continues to swallow Wallace.

Professor Matthiessen's European pilgrimage is reminiscent of Wallace's trip to England and France last winter and spring in which he repeatedly misrepresented American public opinion. In this respect Professor Matthiessen is the more vulnerable. For Harvard University, under whose auspices he made his trip, is presumably attempting a less partisan program in establishing the Salzburg Seminar and one that is on an adult level. For all his literary learning, when he talks politically and economically in such terms as those above, he creates and adds to European misunderstanding of America. Not that he should be suppressed. But Harvard might do well another time to send along with him someone who *does* understand the American labor movement—possibly even a representative labor leader.

Professor Matthiessen correctly says in his preface that his journal has value to the extent that it "becomes representative of what others are thinking." It is representative of what many Wallace partisans have been thinking and in particular of the ideas of his intellectual followers in the colleges and universities. Through the workings of the Wallace strategy this group has now been cut off from the principal elements both in the liberal movement and in labor. It is to be hoped that after the election the college intellectuals can be persuaded to return. No small part of the cost of the Progressive campaign may be their disillusion and cynicism in defeat.

III

In the presidential election of 1924, Robert LaFollette and his Progressive Party received almost 5 million votes or somewhat over 16 per cent of the total vote cast. If the Wallace party attracted a like percentage of a total of 60 million, this would mean about 10 million. Progressive Party leaders with an eye on Moscow have predicted 5 or 10 million above that figure. There are probably that many liberals willing to vote for the right candidate if he came along. But as the Progressive campaign has shaped up and the last New Dealer, except half-hearted Tugwell, has left Wallace for Truman or a lodge in the backwoods, the possible Progressive vote in November would appear to be less than 5 million, and the probable vote *much* less.

If the Progressive leaders are looking only to a vote upon which they can build for 1952, they have the several Progressive factions to worry them, for the party is split more ways than the Democrats or Republicans. And an even greater hazard is the probable continance of prosperity, which has been given an unwarranted assist for the short run of another four years by the encouragement the Progressives have given to Russian persistence in the tactics of the cold war. A prosperity based on the cold war may or may not be the most pleasant kind to contemplate, but after our experience in World War II, it should not be difficult to maintain it through 1952.

The vote for Wallace may be large enough to make the coming Congress

more reactionary than the last one. But its size will not be disastrous unless it can be misread by the Russians for something it is not. For the Soviets understand American politics even less than do European politicians. In their revolutionary tradition, they look upon American workers as siding with them and upon any such dissident party as the Progressives as giving evidence of disunity in case of international conflict. As to fundamental disunity, every Progressive (except the few card-bearing Communists) knows the falsity of this if he searches his own heart. But the Russians do not know it, and their ignorance, if played upon sufficiently, could make them excessively careless.

P. B.

BOOKS

AN AMERICAN LIBERAL

Robert Morss Lovett's life-story[1] demands no elaborate display of enthusiasm to recommend it to any special category of readers. It is highly literate—that goes without saying; it is good-humored, and written with an engaging simplicity. He does not strain for attention, and his book is, in part, the record of his academic life at Harvard and the University of Chicago, his students, his family and friends, his European and American travels (there is a minor error about Antioch College!), his intellectual interests, and, not least, his services in the Virgin Islands. Lovett observes several times that his attachment to English literature was a mistake: he thinks his proper field was history, and he does display a fine sense of time and tide which places his career in perspective. He has served not only the generation which preceded his, but his own generation and that which followed it, as well. The latest generation can accord him a hearing with pleasure as well as with profit.

We read much, in his pages, of the big men of the old Harvard campus, of the beginnings of "Rockefeller's university," of such figures as William Vaughn Moody and Robert Herrick, and of the younger Chicago literary lights. We learn something—not enough—about the *Dial* editors and contributors, and more about the *New Republic* office headed by Herbert Croly. Lovett is generous in his judgments, and appreciative of such different writers as Moody and James T. Farrell. He puts the reader in position to think long thoughts about the meaning of all the movements and points of view they and others represented.

But there is more to this memoir than what has already been indicated. Lovett modestly suggests that his appendix is the most important part of his book, though, having read the book proper, the reader will disagree. The matter concerns, of course, his elimination as Governor Secretary of the Virgin Islands, and the attempt of Congress to withhold the salary due him for his services, as well as Goodwin Watson of Teachers College, New York, then of the Federal Communications Commission.

What had Lovett done? What crime had he committed? Lovett had long been associated with liberal and quasi-liberal causes. It appears to have been the obnoxious suppression of free speech pursued during World War I by the government and the public—and particularly the government, since it could have set a better example to the public—which Lovett experienced personally and through his friends, during a time when his son died in Belleau Wood, which put iron into this lover of Ruskin and Milton. Lovett, in fact, was no radical in any of the

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[1] *The Autobiography of Robert Morss Lovett: All Our Years.* The Viking Press. 1948. $3.75.

usual senses of the word. He clung hopefully to Woodrow Wilson and his policies, and sought, indeed, to implement them by activities which were grossly misconstrued and meanly attacked. He did his duty in the 1920's by making every effort to further liberal organizations.

It was the Sacco-Vanzetti horror which drove him to the left. "It forced me to accept a doctrine which I had always repudiated as partisan tactics—the class war. It is clear that the two Italians . . . were in the end victims of class hatred. The legal questions were lost sight of in the hatred of the ruling class for two men who challenged it" (p. 190).

Accordingly, he did not hesitate to align himself with any organizations (most of them set up for temporary and specific purposes) appearing to move in proper directions. He did what he had to do, and as a public servant, not a neurotic or careerist: what career was there in it for him? He made no war on the United States; he sought to revive its liberal spirit. His associations with the League for Industrial Democracy, the American Civil Liberties Union, and similar organizations do him all honor. So do his intentions in identifying himself with the American League Against War and Fascism, for example. He was under no illusions that it did not contain communists, and he disdains the pitiful pretences which some of his associates in such ventures have since maintained. What the communists may have thought of Lovett I don't know. I recall an inside-circle communist who spoke with great contempt of Lincoln Steffens, even though, on her testimony, her colleagues were getting good service from him in California. And I recall another communist, of a splinter persuasion, who esteemed himself a great tactician, and who remarked with what was supposed to be shrewdness, "First we use them [meaning the liberals], then we abuse them"—or words to that effect; I've cleaned up the epigram for publication purposes.

If Lovett was a front-man for communist fronts, there was no more worthy American in that position. Those who are interested in honesty in action can profit from reading his letter to the chairman of the American Youth Congress explaining his attitude toward the Emergency Peace Mobilization of 1940, and his general defense of his activities, prepared, probably uselessly, for the enlightenment of the chairman of a Congressional committee.

In any event, the Dies Committee, as part of the more contemptible of its many dubious actions, compiled a long list of Lovett's organizational affiliations, and Lovett was summoned to Washington to answer charges of what were essentially communism. His dismissal from the Virgin Islands was accomplished, and a fantastic effort made to withhold his salary, which Roosevelt felt it necessary, under protest, to accept in order not to endanger war appropriations, but which was finally rebuffed by decision of the Supreme Court.

That Congress was guilty of an outrage can scarcely be doubted. That Lovett and Watson, and William E. Dodd, Jr., merited fellowship is also apparent. If a blow could be struck at them, it could be struck at anybody—aside from the issues

of false evidence and the attempt of Congress to pass what amounted to a bill of attainder.

What, then, is the answer? To discredit Congress? I am heartened by Lovett's temperate account of his experiences. Congress is, to an extent, all of us; it should not be necessary to say anything so obvious. The situation does not call for the kind of unqualified abuse which serves partisan ends. It calls, rather, for a clarification of the circumstances which permitted Congress to go off the deep end as it did, and it calls for appropriate efforts to see that it does not do so in the future. A proper conclusion may well be that American democracy cannot be lost, so long as it can claim persons having the qualities of Lovett, among others, as philosophers and, perhaps, friends.

LOUIS FILLER

THE UNMAKING OF A MYTH

The rise of American technology is one of the great, overshadowing events of history. Along with the obvious physical facts of industrialism have grown up lush mythologies to account for it, evaluate it, and assimilate it to our culture. We have the Free Enterprise Myth on one extreme and the Marxist Myth on the other. The complex reality of what has actually happened and what it has meant in human terms is only beginning to emerge from the snarl of fantasy.

Keith Sward's study of Henry Ford[1] is an extraordinary contribution to this emergent understanding. No single individual comes near to Henry Ford as a symbol of American industry or as a focal point of socio-economic myth-making. Mr. Sward has dug out the history of the man, the vast industry carried on under his name, and the myths that have often obscured both.

Few of Ford's achievements were more impressive than his ability to create in the popular mind a picture of himself that the facts either gravely qualified or flatly contradicted. In some cases the techniques employed seem indistinguishable from Hitler's use of the "Big Lie." The evidence suggests, however, that Mr. Ford was often enough himself deluded by the myth-making machinery that he set up. His personal evasiveness—he almost always had someone else swing the axe in his notorious purges of his top executive ranks, he avoided those he had wronged, he was considerably more inaccessible than an American President—and the sycophantic pattern that came to be traditional among his trained seal publicists combined to reflect back to him the image of himself that he wanted to see. The evidence is also strong that people believed in, and helped create, the Ford legend because they needed something of the sort. In the vast upheaval of the age when America was

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[1] *The Legend of Henry Ford*. Keith Sward. Rinehart & Company. 1948. $5.00. (A Book Find Club selection.)

being put on wheels, paved, and corrupted from the old simplicities, it was reassuring—perhaps necessary—for hundreds of thousands of plain people to believe that the mightiest magnate of them all was really one of themselves. That he was the working man's best friend, the implacable foe of Wall Street, and that in spite (because?) of his provincialism, ignorance, and bigotry no man in all the world was a greater success. That he championed the traditional virtues, fought "booze" and cigarettes, fostered square dancing, and restored colonial villages and collected acres of antiques fitted the picture. At one and the same time he was the man who brought the blessings of the machine to all and who stoutly denied that the making of these new marvels took a deep and irreversible toll from the older values and securities.

The shrewdness and energy that brought Henry Ford to the top in a new, rough-and-tumble industry of fabulous potentialities of wealth are given their full due in Mr. Sward's book. But the mythology is painstakingly dissected and equated with the facts. The notion that Ford was a mechanical genius who single-handedly brought about mass production is put in perspective by the roll of distinguished engineers whose brains he picked and then discarded once his setup was stabilized. The picture of Ford as the pioneer in high wages and the working man's best friend hardly survived the bloody days of Harry Bennett's reign and the early fiasco of Willow Run. But Sward shows the hypocrisy and pure bluff that were behind the "Five Dollar Day," the "nonprofit" production for the First World War, and the special care for minorities and the handicapped. Ford's labor policy was always exactly what might have been expected from a man who believed, and said, that men work only because they must, and work well only through fear.

The shadowboxing of Ford's long feud with Wall Street and his forcing his dealers to finance his tight periods are a familiar story. Also the fact that the Ford family was heavily involved in the speculative clambake that led to the collapse of Michigan banking in 1933. Ford's bucolic "Americanism" gets abundant documentation in Sward's account of the anti-Semitic crusades of the Dearborn *Independent* and Fritz Kuhn's long tenure on the Ford payroll. The sordid story of Harry Bennett's gangster approach to politics and labor relations is also given its share of space.

Few biographies combine the large framework and the detailed documentation that went into this study. Much of the material must have required remarkable sleuthing to uncover. A family-held empire, with no stockholders to report to and a bookkeeping setup which is said to have long resembled a vast blowup of a general store daybook, is a hard thing to get facts about. Lawsuit testimony, the reminiscences of former Ford executives, and reports of government investigators furnish much of the data. It has been assembled and assimilated into a very valuable book.

FREEMAN CHAMPNEY

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THE READER WRITES

HERBERT CROLY'S PROMISE

Dear Sir:

Why, I wondered after reading Mr. Louis Filler's stimulating "The Dilemma, So-called, of the American Liberal" (*Antioch Review,* Summer 1948), did this scholar, usually so sensitive to the forces in American history, come to the conclusion that Herbert Croly was interested "in engineering a plan for America which was essentially Hamiltonian and, it can now be told, had totalitarian implications."

Those acquainted with Croly's *The Promise of American Life* and his many other writings, as well as those who have known him personally, have all testified to the broadness of his political vision. His liberalism was a basic, unifying, cultural belief. There is no better evidence of this, I think, than the fact that on founding *The New Republic* he invited as co-editors two men so very different from himself as Walter Weyl, a truly Jeffersonian liberal, and Walter Lippmann, then still generally considered a Socialist. To call these men "totalitarian," it seems to me, is as ill-contrived as to call the muckrakers "communist."

Nor can I believe that, in this age of semantic sophistication, a reader of Croly's book could be easily victimized by Croly's perhaps strange-sounding vocabulary. It is not difficult to substitute a more acceptable terminology for Croly's old-fashioned symbolisms. If that is done it appears that he was, indeed, the intellectual godfather of Woodrow Wilson's "New Freedom" and Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal."

I am not anxious to engage in polemics with my distinguished colleague who is a far more learned student of American history than I ever will be. However, in seeking a plausible explanation for his interpretation, I had to conclude that Mr. Filler's selections from *The Promise of American Life* were badly chosen and, consequently, give a false impression of Croly's ideas. The book is admittedly open to much differing interpretation. I have had occasion to quote from it, and I am by no means certain that I did Croly justice. Needless to say—though it must be said—the context of Croly's words is crucial. Not a paragraph, a page, a chapter, or even the whole book are sufficient to give a proper picture. The whole range of American history, Croly's understanding of this history in his own time, his personality and, last but not least, our own reading of all of these are decisive. It is therefore with the greatest humility that I wish to add some footnotes to Mr. Filler's appraisal.

1. Mr. Filler gives two quotations from Croly to the effect that, in his own excellent paraphrasing, "the fault in the American system lay deep; it was Jeffersonian. . . . Hamilton, after all, had the answer." But by themselves Mr. Filler's quotations give a wrong impression of Croly's general theory. True, Croly wrote as a Hamiltonian, and many of his comments on Jefferson seem to me false. But what Croly really wanted was the achievement of Jeffersonian ends by Hamiltonian means,

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that is, the accomplishment of democratic values by a strong federal government rather than by weak state governments. There are many sentences to this effect in Croly's book. Americans, Croly wrote, "have been after a fashion Hamiltonian, and Jeffersonian after more of a fashion; but they have never recovered from the initial disagreement between Hamilton and Jefferson. If there is any truth in the idea of a constructive relation between democracy and nationality *this disagreement must be healed. They must accept both principles loyally and unreservedly.*" (1914 edition, pp. 213-214; italics mine, H.E.)

2. Mr. Filler gives the impression, supported by a quotation, that Croly believed the Negroes to be morally and intellectually inferior to the white man. The quotation, it seems to me, is taken out of a most vital, immediate context. Croly excoriated, in equally strong words, the rabid Abolitionists and the irascible Southerners because both endangered the continued existence of the union. Perhaps Croly did not watch his words when he wrote that the Southerners "were right, moreover, in believing that the Negroes were a race possessed of moral and intellectual qualities inferior to those of the white men." But to conclude from this that Croly himself believed it is preposterous. Indeed, he continued saying that the Southerners "overworked their conviction of Negro inferiority." Croly tried to interpret the feeling of the Southerners who, in his opinion, knew better than the Abolitionists that the Negro question in the South was the result of "a complicated and delicate set of economic and social conditions." And he subsequently pointed out that "the consequence of their wrong-headedness was more disastrous than it was in the case of the Abolitionists" (1914 edition, p. 81). If any further evidence is needed to prove that Croly did *not* believe in Negro inferiority, is there any better testimony than the record of his *New Republic* which from its first issue on fought the myth of the Negro's inferiority?

3. Mr. Filler quotes Croly to the effect that he held the unification of Europe attainable "only by the same old means of blood and iron." Actually, Croly hoped for just the opposite. He advocated what came later to be known as "collective security." In the paragraph following Mr. Filler's quotation Croly wrote that "the nations will never agree upon a permanent settlement until they have tried again and again the *dangerous chances of war, and have more to gain from peace than from military victory.*" Croly demanded that the nations which "are at present sincerely desirous of peace" should not partially disarm. For such diminution of their military efficiency would be fatal: "such an action would merely encourage the belligerent Powers to push their aggressive plans to the limit." (1914 edition, p. 264; italics mine, H.E.)

I think time has vindicated Herbert Croly. The Great Depression demonstrated the inability of the states to cope with our nation-wide economic system. The Negro question, bungled in the days of Reconstruction, is still with us. Partial disarmament of the democratic nations after the first World War proved disastrous. And Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life* is still a promise. HEINZ EULAU

(Editor's Note: Mr. Eulau was Assistant Editor of *The New Republic,* 1944-1947.)

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